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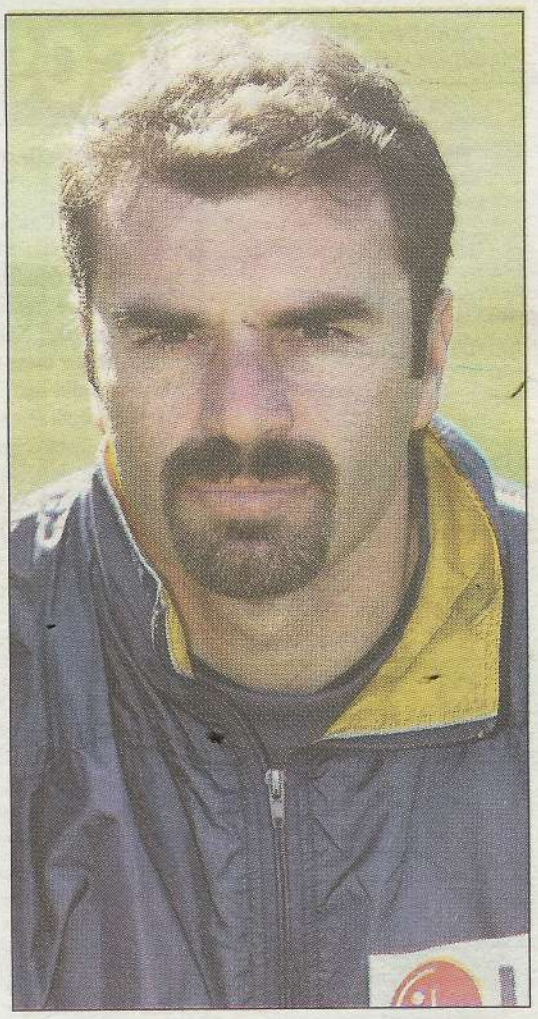
Australia's U17s World Cup Hit Squad Unveiled

● THE FULL SQUAD ●

NAME	POSITION	CLUB
COE Nathan	Goalkeeper	AIS
REX Jacob	Goalkeeper	Northern Spirit
BOJIC Predrag	Defender	Parramatta Power
DILEVSKI Spase	Defender	VIS
HUNTER Matthew	Defender	Northern Spirit
STUDMAN Brett	Defender	NSWIS
VAN DOMMELE	Adam	Defender
WILKINSON Alex	Defender	Northern Spirit
BROXTON Darren	Midfielder	Southampton FC — England
AGIUS Frederick	Midfielder	Sydney Olympic
DANZE Anthony	Midfielder	AIS/Perth Glory
STEVENS Ben	Midfielder	QAS
VALERI Carl	Midfielder	AIS
ENGELE Matthew	Striker	AIS/Northern Spirit
HOLMAN Brett	Striker	Parramatta Power
LUCAS Jay	Striker	Southampton FC — England
SMITH Terry	Striker	AIS
WALSH Sean	Striker	AIS
* BROWN Michael	Midfielder	Parramatta Power
* STAVROULAKIS Nick	Midfielder	NSWIS

Brett Studman: Defender.


Angie Postecoglou: Australia's U17s Coach.

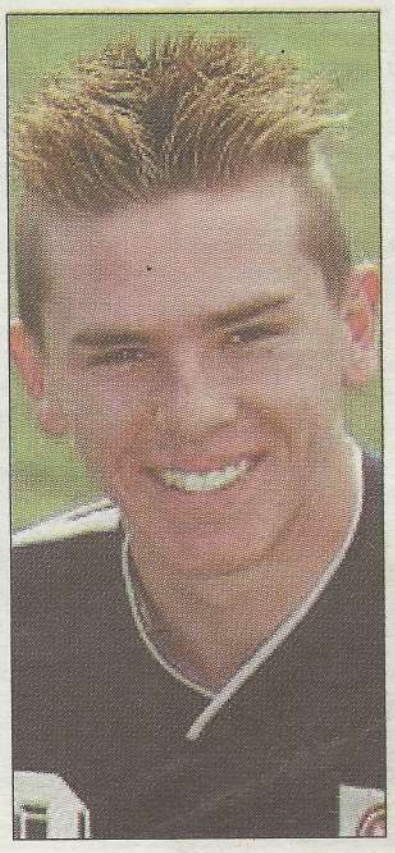
Ben Stevens: Midfielder.

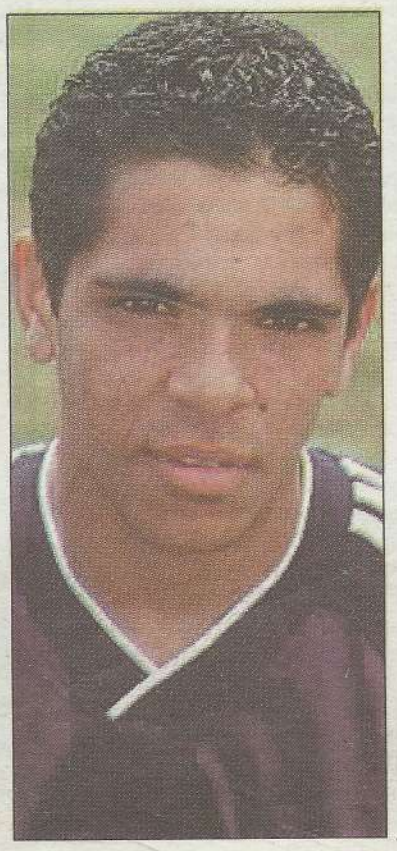
National Youth Coach Angie Postecoglou yesterday announced Australia's 20-man squad that will travel to Trinidad & Tobago for the 2001 FIFA Under 17 World Championships, in September.

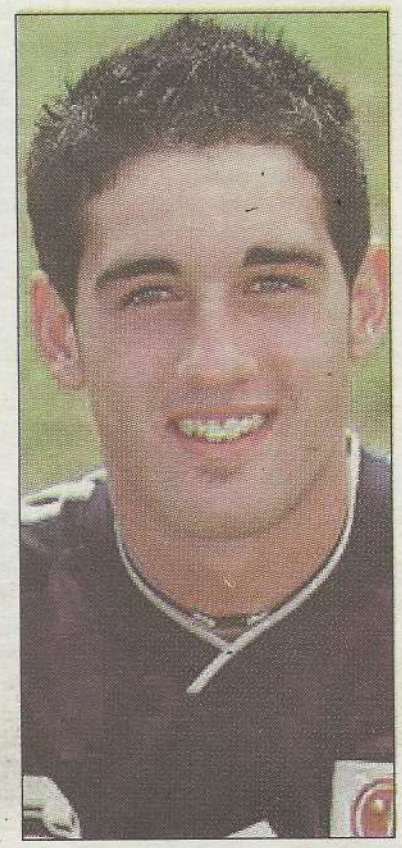
AIS Midfielder Carl Valeri has been named captain of the Australian Under 17 side, which ahs been drawn in Group A, alongside Croatia, Brazil and host nation Trinidad & Tobago.

The squad will travel to Miami for a training camp later this month, prior to the September 14, commencement of the World Championships.

However, midfeilders Michael Brown and Nick Stavroulakis will travel with the team to Miami for camping, but are billed to return back to Australia, while the other 18 players proceed to the tournament proper.


Brett Holman: Striker.


Frederick Agius: Midfielder.


Carl Valeri: Midfielder & Captain.

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Australia to tackle Italy's Azurris

After lengthy and comprehensive discussions with the Italian Football Federation, Soccer Australia has secured a match between the Australia's Socceroos and triple world champions Italy.

The match, which is scheduled to be played in Italy on 17 April 2002, will be the first time that the two countries will meet at senior international level and would be the last serious hit-out for either country prior to next year's FIFA World Cup.

The agreement was reached after many years of determined negotiations by theSoccer Australia Chairman, Tony Labbozetta who along with marketing partners IEC, recognize the importance of playing such world class opposition for the benefit of Socceroos and the code overall in Australia.

"I am thoroughly pleased that we have been able to finally agree with the Italian Football Federation, after many, many years of discussions in personally trying to secure this monumental clash," said Soccer Australia Chairman Tony Labbozzetta.

"The match will not only form part of our crucial build-up for the FIFA World Cup Finals in Korea/Japan, but we're hoping that these discussions lead to the formation of a two-legged challenge, with the return match being played in Australia.

"Along with the other matches we have organised in the lead-up to November, we are committed to looking at the long-term benefits for the National Team and will leave no stone unturned for coach Frank Farina and the players," Labbozzetta concluded.

Discussions are also continuing for an international friendly match in Europe in October, prior to the fixture against current World, Confederation and European champions France in Melbourne on 11 November followed by the two-legged play-off against the fifth placed South American nation.

ALZAMENDI BEGINS COSMOS' BUILD-UP

By Graham Cooke

New Canberra Cosmos coach Antonio Alzamendi got down to the daunting task of building a competitive team from scratch last week, as the National Soccer League club began their much-postponed pre-season build-up.

Alzamendi must accomplish the task in the two months before Canberra kick off their NSL program with a game away to Adelaide Force on October 5.

Among the players to have shown early interest is former captain and midfielder Ivan Zelic, who played for Melbourne Knights last season and is currently appearing in the Premiership for Canberra Deakin.

Also at training was futsal international David Palywoda, and Geoff Howarth, a speedy wingman who failed to impress in his previous NSL outings under Rale Rasic and Tom Sermanni, but who is playing some of the best football of his career with Vlado Horvat at Canberra Deakin.

So far there was no sign of the experienced NSL players the Cosmos needs so desperately in order to make an impression on the competition. The club believes captain Robbie Hooker will begin training this week and hopes Con Anthopolous, Mark Hagger and Marcus Phillips will not be far behind him.

However, rumours persist that Hagger does not want to return to Canberra.

Meanwhile Alzamendi is taking the opportunity of seeing as many ACT area games as possible.

Speaking through an interpreter, he said he did not believe he would have too many problems in getting a team together.

"I have contacts in Melbourne and Sydney and have already drawn up a shortlist of people I may want," he said.

"The local Canberra players will get their chance first and I will see what holes I have left in the squad before I begin to look elsewhere."

He said there were players around Australia and overseas who had expressed an interest in coming to Canberra, including one from the River Plate club in Buenos Aires 'who I have been talking to'.

He said his assistant will be Gabriel Wilk, a local player and coach of South American ancestry. The priority would now be the appointment of someone to take change of the National Youth League team.

Alzamendi has indicated that he will have the composition of his final squad in mind within the next two weeks, after which pre-season training will commence, including a possible training camp interstate.

Antonio Alzamendi: "I've drawn-up a shortlist of people I may want."

Trials will continue for the rest of this week and next at the Australian Institute of Sport multi-purpose fields.

... as Farina unveil 20-man squad for Japan

Australia senior national coach Frank Farina meanwhile last week named a 20-man squad for Australia's AFC/OFC Challenge Cup match against Japan, which takes place on 15 August in Shizuoka, Japan.

Farina chose a strong squad with an even number of overseas and Australian based players, in addition to Mark Robertson, Paul Reid and Saso Petrovski being drafted into the senior National side for the first time.

NAME	POSITION	CLUB
BOLTON Clint	Goalkeeper	Sydney Olympic
PETKOVIC Jason	Goalkeeper	Perth Glory
CASSERLY Luke	Defender	AIK Solna
HORVAT Steve	Defender	Melbourne Knights
LAYBUTT Stephen	Defender	Feyenoord
POPOVIC Tony	Defender	Sanfrecce Hiroshima*
DE AMICIS Fausto	Defender	South Melbourne
BINGLEY Matthew	Defender	Newcastle United
CHIPPERFIELD Scott	Midfielder	FC Basel
ROBERTSON Mark	Midfielder	Dundee FC
WEHRMAN Kasey	Midfielder	Moss FK
CORICA Steve	Midfielder	Sanfrecce Hiroshima
BOUTSIANIS Con	Midfielder	Kingz FC
REID Paul	Midfielder	Wollongong Wolves
COSTANZO Angelo	Midfielder	Marconi Stallions
VIDMAR Aurelio	Midfielder	Adelaide City
ALOISI John	Striker	Osasuna
ZDRILIC David	Striker	SP VGG Unterhaching
CARDOZO Pablo	Striker	Northern Spirit
PETROVSKI Sasho	Striker	Wollongong Wolves

Krncevic: I'm honoured to coach South

"I'm extremely honoured to be joining such a large and successful club as South Melbourne," said newly-appointed coach, Eddie Krncevic, moments after being unveiled to the media, last week.

"I look forward to a new and exciting era over the next few years and nurturing new talent with Jeff Oliver and the MVP team".

Krncevic, who represented Australia on 35 occasions and scored 17 goals, joins the club from Marconi Stallions whom he lead to the finals during both his seasons as coach.

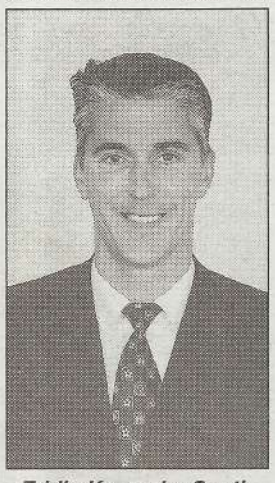
Along with a successful 14-year playing career in Europe, Krncevic also played a century of games in the National League and is well known for his eye for young talent and in addition to his role as Senior Coach, will play a key role in South's Institute program.

In his debut season as coach, Krncevic led his young Carlton side to the Grand Final. Ironically, his side was defeated by South Melbourne.

However, Krncevic was acknowledged for the promotion and development of the Socceroo stars he uncovered during that two-year stint, including Marco Bresciano, Vince Grella and Simon Colosimo.

Krncevic has joined South Melbourne on a two-year deal and will work together with former Carlton assistant, Jeff Oliver and the MVP team for the 2001/2002 season. MVP was contracted last season, to effectively run the football operations of the club.

South Melbourne meanwhile commenced pre-season training ton Monday, 6 August with Krncevic left the daunting task of rebuilding the side in time for the upcoming season.



Eddie Krncevic: South Melbourne's new coach.

EDDIE KRNCEVIC
Factfile

Full Name: Eddie Krncevic
Nationality: Australian
Marital Status: Married with 2 children
Date of Birth: 14/8/1960 (40 years old)
Coaching Debut: 1997/98 Season
Previous Clubs: Marconi Stallions, Carlton SC
Coaching Record: 124 Games (W 50 — D 28 — L 46)
Achievements: 1997/98 Grand Finalist (Carlton), 1999/2000 Finals Series (Marconi), 2000/2001 Finals Series (Marconi)

*Born and raised in Melbourne
*Played 35 games and scored 17 goals for the Socceroos between 1979 and 1989
*Played in Europe between 1982-96 with Dynamo Zagreb (Croatia), Duisburg (Germany), Cercle Brugge, Anderlecht, Liege, Aalst, Charleroi (Belgium), and Mulhouse (France)
*Belgium League Top Scorer 1988/89 with Anderlecht
*Took Carlton to the 1997/98 NSL Grand Final in his first year of coaching

Soccer Australia's 'New' Board

At last Saturday afternoon's Extraordinary General Meeting of Soccer Australia, gathered at Sydney's Airport Hilton Hotel, saw Soccer's ugly head of politics rise, yet again.

Incumbent Chairman, Tony Labbozzetta, surprisingly was dethroned as leader.

Equally surprisingly, was the fact that Labbozzetta was replaced by former Canberra Cosmos chairman, Ian Knop.

The four Commissioners of the new Board who survived the elections, are Les Avory, Joe Brondolino, Bill Walker and Greg Woods.

Previous Commissioner, Ms Cheryl Bart, as in the case of Labbozzetta, missed out on being re-elected.

Ian Knop: Soccer Australia's newly elected Chairman.

Unashamedly, and unquestionably persistently, nasty back-biting politics has always suffocated Australian Soccer.

Such periodical political blood-shedding over the years, has done absolutely nothing but to destabilise and scar our game nationwide.

Year in, year out, we have 'new' people marching into our game, ('unscreened'), for self-benefit and/or political gain.

Year in, year out, we are told by these people how much they 'love Soccer', or 'I've been involved in Soccer for the past twenty, thirty or forty years'.

So what?

The real question that should automatically be asked: "If that is so, what have you done for Soccer in those twenty, thirty or forty years?"

Back in the 60s, Soccer was the Number 2 footballing code in Australia. And the players were all part-timers.

Today, with most players being fulltime in Soccer, Rugby Union as well as AFL have rocketted well past our code on the domestic scene whether we like to admit it or not.

The marketing and promotion of Rugby League, Union and AFL, are all at an all time high.

Australian Soccer in these same areas are at an all time low.

And all this despite the fact that Australia, over the past decade or so, has been able to hugely export a stack of players of acceptable quality, to Europe.

The general standard, fitness and development of our players has rocketted, whilst the general standard of our administration, and the code's image, have dived.

And why?

The ever-persistent high levels of politics within Soccer.

Politics that today, have reached unbearable levels of saturation.

Over the past four odd decades this columnist has been following Soccer in our country.

He has seen and heard, stacks of former, incompetent, administrators and policy making leaders, make huge promises, plus huge predictions, of what 'they are going to do for the code'.

None in the past, have done much, (or anything at all).

What they have done though, (almost all without exception), was to massage and boost their very own profiles and egos by using their platforms and sporting administrative status, to grab media attention.

All decisions made have been for their own political survival.

None of our so-called 'leaders' have really 'kicked goals' for Australian Soccer.

Must we name them all?

Most of our former 'leaders' have been very costly to

Ms Cheryl Bart: Former Commissioner of Soccer Australia.

Australian Soccer, not to mention useless.

As useless as bowling 'lifters' outside leg stump to England's Test batsman, Marcus Trescothick.

I have for many, many years, always recognised Australian Soccer's major ailment.

Visionary leadership.

We have always had the World's biggest and greatest sport, for years.

But in all those same long years, we've never had the high quality administration that Soccer, (especially today), demands.

Every era has been the same.

Never have we had involved former Australian internationals on any Board.

Why do other sports have

By John Economos

former internationals involved somewhere?

Cricket does, Tennis does, Union does.

Why on Earth not Soccer?

By having former internationals involved, with actual-experience of the game, at all levels, one can administer

Marcus Trescothick: As useless as bowling 'lifters' to his leg-stump.

the code far more effectively.

Former internationals must be involved, not politicians.

At least former internationals wouldn't be so politically vicious or deceitful.

Year in, year out, the nation's frustrations compound.

'Joe Public' has had more than enough of Soccer's seemingly endless stream of politicians.

Politicians that come into the game to see what Soccer can do for them.

In the words of the legendary Abraham Lincoln, (almost 100 years later also adopted by J.F.K.): "See what you can do for America.

"Not what America can do for you."

Should this not be the case for our Soccer hierarchy?

Our so called 'Executives', or 'Directors', (in recent years labelled 'Commissioners'), have always voted purely for their political survival. Not on matters that will benefit Soccer.

In recent years, South Sydney Rugby League unearthed a real gem of a leader.

A real and soundly effective heroic general.

George Piggins.

What were Piggins' credentials?

His credentials were very basic, but essential.

Credentials that our very own Soccer hierarchy should possess to become successful for our code.

Piggins is a man of the people.

A very honest, down-to-earth man, with a deep seated passion for his code.

His mere image inspires instant trust.

Over the past two years, it has been extensively chronicled what George Piggins has achieved for his battling Club, (Souths), for survival.

Piggins is a leader. Piggins is humble.

Piggins' added, but nevertheless important qualification, is that he was a former first grade player.

And to galvanise all of the above qualities, Piggins is NOT a politician.

What Piggins is though, he's a real winner and a real leader.

Piggins, despite his lack of formal education, puts to great shame most of our own administrators.

He simply and bluntly

Tony Labbozzetta: Dethroned last Saturday afternoon.

refuses to be bogged down by politics.

Piggins just fights his way through to get all his jobs done for South Sydney, and does it extremely well.

To our Soccer bosses, please take note.

LABBOZZETTA'S REACTION

Tony Labbozzetta was clearly shocked after his removal as the Soccer Australia chairman at the extraordinary general meeting last Saturday afternoon.

The President of Club Marconi said he felt betrayed by some people from whom he had obviously expected to receive support.

"I was surprised indeed given that the numbers last night (Friday), were stacking up and today there has obviously been a change of heart by a number of people," said Labbozzetta.

"Clearly they have given the mandate to the four members that were there and they have elected Ian Knop as the chairman and Greg Woods as the deputy chairman."

Labbozzetta also revealed that this was perhaps the lowest point in his career as a Soccer administrator and while still retaining his current position at Club Marconi, was unsure of his future in Soccer.

"Given that you've had a number of people that have promised you certain responsibilities and then you find on the day they've betrayed that, but that's the way it is, that's football politics."

Asked if there had been a "Judas" in his camp, Labbozzetta replied "maybe more than one".

Sydney businessman and former Canberra Cosmos chairman Ian Knop, replaced Labbozzetta as the new Soccer Australia chairman and described the turn of events as, "emotional, tense and exciting".

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Wednesday 8th August 2001
Monday 13th August 2001
Wednesday 15th August 2001
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The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

SBS TV this Sunday (August 12th), will telecast the England Charity Shield clash between Liverpool and Manchester United at 10.30pm (a.e.s.t.).

South Australia and Darwin will get the telecast at 10.00 pm whilst over in Perth the Big Match will be screened at 8.30 pm.

Special guest on the SBS panel will be none other than Wollongong Wolves' ace goalscorer and newly installed skipper, Stuart Young.

The Charity Shield, (first played back in 1908), has served as the curtain raiser every year to the new season of the England Premier League kicking off.

Liverpool won the F.A. Cup last season whilst Manchester United took out the League Championship for the record seventh time in the past nine years.

This titanic clash that will be contested at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium in Wales, promises to be a real 'Battle Royale'.

Manchester United's ace right midfielder and visionary playmaker, David Beckham, is just one of the super stars that will be playing, in a duel that boasts a wide galaxy of high-profiled international players.

Beckham, England's captain, is set for yet another big season, especially with World Cup qualifiers still not finalised.

United's manager, Sir Alex Ferguson, (in his last season at the helm of the England League Champions), is expected to parade his two new multi million dollar off-season signings of Juan Sebastian Veron and Ruud Van Nistelrooy.

Also on the show will be SBS' anchor man of the panel, journalist Kyle Patterson with another guest, Ron Tilsed, former England Youth international goalkeeper.

DAVID BECKHAM: England's World Cup captain.

□□□□

PAUL REID last week was saluted in grand style by Australia's World Cup manager, Frank Farina who wisely selected him in his Australian squad to travel to Japan next week.

The brilliant industrious Wollongong Wolves' midfielder, was also this year's winner of the 'Australian and British Soccer Weekly—Player of The Year'.

First his Club coach Ronnie Corry, then former Australian World Cup captain John Warren, last January rated that Paul Reid, despite his tender years, (18), has the ability and capacity to make it all the way onto the international arenas for Australia in years to come.

Now Farina has 'rubber stamped' these most qualified predictions by capping Reid already.

Congratulations Paul Reid.

□□□□

MARCONI TRAVEL as from this week, has finalised special 'World Cup' packages for Australia's last qualifying match to be played at the M.C.G. late November against the still unknown South American opponent.

The complete travel packages cover return domestic airfares, a ticket to the match plus one, or more nights accommodation.

MARCONI TRAVEL

For bookings and/or further inquiries, please contact Fransesca or Carol at Marconi Travel on (02)-9728 1900, for preferential bookings.

Please note that there are only a limited number of these 'World Cup packages' available and will be sold out well before the month of November.

PAUL REID: Gains selection for Australian squad.

By John Economos

NIGERIA as (reported in 'Good Oil' last edition), became the fifth African nation last week to make it to the 2002 Japan/Korea World Cup Finals.

Nigeria defeated Ghana 3-0 early last week to thus grab the last of five African 'tickets' to the World Cup and head for Asia next May.

KANU: Nigeria's ace striker.

The Nigerians now join the other four African World Cup finalists, the Camerouns, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia.

□□□□

AUSTRALIA has arranged an international to be played against Italy on April 17th next year, possibly in Rome.

Mr Tony Labbozzetta broke the news late last week and said that the match has been scheduled to take place about six weeks prior to the World Cup finals kicking off in Japan/Korea.

It's expected that this historic match will also serve the purpose of being the last serious warm-up game for either/or both nations before the World Cup commences next year.

Mr Labbozzetta also hinted that there appears a chance that Italy at a later date would also come out to Australia for a tour.

Australia has never played Italy at senior level.

Last year Australia's Under 23s played the current European champions Italy in the first match of the 2000 Olympic Games at the M.C.G.

The Italians have won the World Cup three times.

In addition to this international against Italy, Australia has been blueprinted to play friendly internationals against Japan in Shizuoka, tomorrow week, (August 15th), as well as against the Solomon Islands three days later in Honiara.

On November 11th, Australia has a full international against France, set down to be played at the M.C.G.

This game will be followed by the two legged World Cup qualifier against our, (yet unknown), South American opponent.

PAOLO MALDINI: Italy's World Cup captain.

□□□□

SADLY we must report the death late last week of former Ku-Ring-Gai Soccer Association, Mr Don Allen.

The Late Mr Allen was the founder of the NSW state League Club, along with such people as also the Late Mr Col Scott-Kemmis.

Mr Allen who was also President of Kur-Ring-Gai Soccer Club, (later labelled North Shore United), was still attending Manly Warringah Dolphin matches up till just a few weeks back.

North Shore United a few years ago merged with Manly Warringah.

Later, through a further merger with the Warringah Dolphins, saw that neither the 'North Shore' or Ku-ring-gai' names survived in the present senior football.

Mr Don Allen had been residing in the Blue Mountains and was aged 83.

His funeral was held last Friday morning at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium.

Our sincerest condolences to Mr Allen's surviving son.

□□□□

ANDY HARPER, (as 'Good Oil' broke two weeks ago), has now been officially announced that he's been signed up by Kerry Packer's Channel 9 Network.

The snap signing by the 'Big Bloke's' Network is obviously seen as a giant preperational step as the Nine Network gears up for its exclusive free-to-air coverage of next year's World Cup Finals from Japan/Korea.

'Harps' will now become a member of the Network's crack 'Wide World of Sport' team.

The former Newcastle United striker broke into television as a guest panelist with SBS.

Harper's sterling work for SBS during the 1998 World Cup Finals in France did not go unnoticed by the Nine Network and thus was offered a contract.

A graduate in Communications, the 34 year old Harper has had stints as a commentator with ABC Radio, Fox Sports, C-7 as well as SBS.

It's understood from Channel 9 that Harper will not be used exclusively only for Soccer.

As a player in the NSL, Andy Harper rattled up no less than 321 games scoring 101 goals in the process.

But Harper's real value was not only in scoring, but creating goals for others.

The highly intelligent striker kicked off his durable career with Sydney City before moving to Sydney Olympic.

After Olympic Harper moved across to St George and then later to Marconi where later he skippered the side.

From Marconi Harper was snapped up by the Brisbane Strikers' coach John Kosmina where he had two very successful seasons with the Queenslanders before joining the then rookie NSL coach, Lee Sterrey to hugely inspire the Newcastle Breakers/United for the remaining two seasons of his senior career.

From all at ABSW—'All the Georgie Best of luck Andy in this newest of chapters in your life.'

ANDY HARPER: Signed up by Kerry Packer for Channel 9.

FOR ADVERTISING IN ABSW, PLEASE CALL (02) 9744 6984

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

By John Economos

SBS-TV tomorrow week, (Wednesday August 12th, 2001), will delay-telecast the match Japan vs Australia at 10.00pm to ALL centres, irrespective of local time-zone differences.

This inaugural 'AFC-OFC Challenge Cup' will be played in the Japanese City of Shizuoka.

KYLE PATTERSON: SBS' presenter and journalist.

The City of Shizuoka will also serve as a venue for next year's World Cup Finals.

As champions of Asia, (won in Lebanon at the end of last year), Japan will clash with Australia, the current Champions of Oceania.

This international will be played at the Ecopa Stadium that has a capacity of 45,000.

Australia will be seeking some form of revenge following their defeat by Japan earlier this year in during the Confederation Cup semi-finals.

Due to a congested international fixture calender, this Challenge Cup will be played for in a one-off game.

However the next Challenge Cup, (already pencilled in for 2003), will take the format on a home and away basis.

❑❑❑❑

ROBBIE ENES, the Northern Spirit's sweeper or playmaker, left Australia last Friday bound for Norway.

The 25 year old former international will be on loan till the end of October where there is an option for him to either stay in Europe or return to Australia.

In other news concerning the Spirit, the Club's most informative media liaison officer, David Mason, stated to 'Good Oil' the rumours buzzing around Sydney that recently signed right wingback Robbie Traykovski is in Europe on trials, are just not correct whatsoever.

Mr Mason informed us that the former Perth Glory and ball-playing attacking defender, is in fact currently in Melbourne, and will shift to Sydney within two weeks to commence pre-season training with the Spirit's head coach Mickey Hickman.

❑❑❑❑

WITH just 297 days to go before the next World Cup Finals blast off, excitement in Korea, (especially in the capital Seoul), is already rapidly firing up.

More than 200 hotels in the 10 host cities are preparing already for the expected huge influx of Soccer fans that will invade Korea for the World Cup.

Luxury hotel reservations may now be made by contacting the '2002 FIFA World Cup Accommodation Bureau of Korea' on 0011-82-2-738-2006 or, by faxing 0011-82-2-738-2165.

E-mail address is: sales.korea@fifa-hotels.com.

Website is: www.fifa-hotel.com.

The Opening Match will be played in Seoul on May 31st.

Sales of the 'K.R.P.' (Korean Railroad Pass), has been expanded Worldwide for the 2002 World Cup Finals to urgently assist in resolving traffic and transportation problems during this huge Soccer event.

This 'KRP' is currently on sale only in Japan and the USA and this special Pass will allow the holder as many times as he chooses to ride the trains within a specific time period.

ROBBIE ENES: Off to Norway on loan till the end of October.

❑❑❑❑

THE OCEANIA FOOTBALL CONFEDERATION, (OFC), is currently seeking to appoint a full-time Media Officer.

This media Officer will be based and operate out of Sydney.

As an urgent need to vastly improve the levels of communication with both the mass media and general public, the OFC is looking for a suitably qualified person with the necessary skills for media relations, media coverage of OFC events, and be responsible to the OFC's publications, (print and electronic).

Applicants with interest and relevant experience, must apply in writing to:

Ms Josephine King.

General Secretary of O.F.C. by E-mail at:

josephine@ofcfoot.org.nz or by Fax (649) 525 8164 no later than August 12th, 2001.

❑❑❑❑

ADRIAN CERVINSKI, the Melbourne Knights' goalscorer, was last week signed up by Mickey Hickman's Northern Spirit.

The Cervinski signing is the tenth rattled up by the Spirit's Head coach Mickey Hickman during the current off-season.

The 27 year old Cervinski is now the last of the nine off-season new signings made by the Spirit.

Cervinski will re-unite with Pablo Cardozo in the Spirit's strike-line.

The two goalscorers played together with Sydney Olympic three seasons ago.

MICKEY HICKMAN: The Spirit's head coach.

The 27 year old Cervinski last season scored 13 goals for the Knights to lift his personal tally in the NSL to an impressive 63 in 143 outings.

The other nine signings completed over the past eight weeks are: Lupce Acevski (Melbourne Knights), Simon Bell (Marconi), Pablo Cardozo (Olympic), Michael Cartwright (the Kingz), Brent Fisher (Christchurch City), John Hutchinson (Eastern Pride), Andy McDermott (Notts County), Robbie Traykovski (Perth Glory) and Julian Watt (Luton Town).

The Spirit kicks off its pre-season training on Monday week (August 20th).

ADRIAN CERVINSKI: Snapped up last week by the Northern Spirit.

❑❑❑❑

WHO is going to be Australia's South American opponent for our last World Cup qualifying hurdle, come November 14th?

For it will be on the night of November 14th when the last of the South American qualifiers will have been completed and the identity of our final opponent will thus have surfaced.

But does it really matter right now who that South American opponent will be?

Brasil, Colombia, Uruguay?

Almost four years ago it was Iran.

Who will ever forget that dreadful night of November 29th, 1997 at the M.C.G.?

Through sheer and unforgivable stupidity, which involved a combination of some totally wrong team selections, (especially midfielders), lack of team discipline, plus a glaring tactical error for the last 15 minutes of the game, saw Australia fail to qualify for the World Cup in France.

And we failed, despite not having lost a single qualifying match along the way.

What other nation could have managed this?

Mistakes can happen one may say and its only human to make them.

But to repeat them is sheer stupidity.

What about the discipline on that horrendous evening?

For example, why was a central marker allowed to go galloping up the flank with minutes to go and Australia leading 2-0?

So it doesn't matter too much who we meet.

What's essential and of paramount importance, is to score well at home and how we play.

ALEX TOBIN: Australia's captain at the M.C.G. against Iran in 1997.

What's essential, Australia MUST win the home leg by at least 2-0 as anything less than that will ultimately prove useless in our away leg.

❑❑❑❑

THERE are still five round of matches still left to be played by the 10 South American nations.

The next round of qualifiers are to be played next Wednesday, and are as follows:

Brasil vs Paraguay.

Ecuador vs clear leaders Argentina.

Chile vs Bolivia.

Colombia vs Peru.

Venezuela vs Uruguay.

The current South American standings after 12 matches played, are:

Argentina	29 points.
Paraguay	23 points.
Ecuador	22.
Brasil	21.
Colombia	19.
Uruguay	18.
Peru	12.
Chile	10.
Bolivia	10.
Venezuela	4.

HAJDUK WANDERERS SOCCER CLUB INC

COACHES WANTED

Applications are invited for the 2002 Season for the following coaching positions.
All applicants must hold a minimum intermediate licence.

SUPER LEAGUE
U/18's, U21's & First Grade.

YOUTH LEAGUE
U/13's, U/14's, U/15's, U/16's.

CADET LEAGUE
U/11's & U/12's.

Applications to be sent to:
THE SECRETARY
P.O. BOX 200
PENDLE HILL. NSW. 2145.
OR BY FAX TO 9609 6696

Enquiries Contact: CHARLES ABDILLA
9757 2906 or 0416 171 896
Applications Close: 31st August 2001

BONNYRIGG
WHITE EAGLES
SOCCER CLUB

NSW Premier
Super Youth League

Requires a Youth League Co-ordinator, and Coaches for it's 6 Super Youth League teams 2002 season: U/11s, U/12s, U/13s, U/14s, U/15s, U/17s.
The interested persons must hold Level (2) Coaching Certificates, also to state previous experiences.
All the above will be paid for their services, the amounts are to be discussed.

Applications should be forwarded to the Secretary Jack Cirjanic
P.O. Box 226, Cabramatta. NSW. 2166.
Phone: 9823-7714 ● Fax: 9823-6997

Applications for the above positions close on Friday 24th August, 2001.

Sharon Black: Members of the Young Matildas will be aiming to step into her shoes at the senior level.

SOCCER WOMAN BY JANENE MAR

YOUNG MATILDAS KICK-OFF WITH GOALFEST

YOUNG MATILDAS 10
(Catherine Cannuli 17m, 19m, 30m, 51m, Lana Harch 48m, 58m, 90m, Justine McLaughlin 74m, Elissia Canham 79m, own goal 88m)
SINGAPORE 0

NSW INSTITUTE OF SPORT 2
(Anissa Tann-Darby 65m, Jessica Palmer 73m)
VIETNAM 0

The Young Matildas kicked off their preparations towards next year's World Youth Championship qualifiers with a 10-0 whitewash over Singapore on the opening night of the Central Coast International Series on Sunday.

The NSW Institute of Sport outfit overcame a tough Vietnam 2-0 to keep all the points at home as both matches were played simultaneously at Gosford's Pluim Park.

A hesitant start from the Young Matildas on the bumpy, sandy pitch was laid to rest by the attacking prowess of Catherine Cannuli, who soon took matters into her own hands. Mesmerising the opposition near goal, the 15-year-old notched up all three of the home side's first half goals, before finishing with a bag of four. Lana Harch then took up the reins on goal in the second half and claimed a hat-trick of her own.

A new team under new coach Mike Mulvey, the Australian Under 19s combined together well and showed too much flair and nouse for Singapore's diminuitive and inexperienced senior national side. The visitors tried hard but rarely saw possession of the ball and were unable to counteract the Australians' physical advantage and skill.

Once settled into the game, the Young Matildas destroyed the opposition from out wide, Collette McCallum outstanding up the left flank and providing excellent service to the front line, and Harch effective up the right.

The Australian account was opened after 17 minutes, Cannuli deflecting into goal under the keeper an inviting low ball from McCallum. Just two minutes later, Cannuli struck again, taking the ball at the opposition before dummying the keeper and slotting home. The Sydneysider's hattrick, created within a 13-minute period, was completed as she stepped around two defenders and finished with a fantastic swerving drive into the far corner of goal.

Three minutes after the break, a low McCallum cross was missed by the keeper and found its way to Harch at the far post for the Queenslander to slot in unchallenged for a 4-0 lead. Another three minutes in, the ball was neatly slipped through to an unmarked Cannuli who managed to poke her shot in as the goalkeeper came out to challenge. Cannuli promptly got up from the tackle with the ball creeping toward goal, and in showman style, dived onto the ground to 'head' the ball the extra six inches over the line.

Singapore then gave the ball away in the backline and an Australian cross came low and hard which the defence failed to clear, allowing Harch to pounce in on the loose ball with a first-time drive.

Substitute Justine McLaughlin posted her name on the scoresheet after closing down the keeper and her block tackle shot found its way into goal. Elissia Canham also came in off the bench and scored with a great first time strike off the outside of the boot.

"The scoreline was excessive in the end, but we earned everything we got," said Mulvey. "I thought we started sluggishly, then the liveliest on the field Catherine Cannuli showed how destructive she can be. She took her goals very well and was dangerous all the time. Once in control, we used the width very well - Collette McCallum supplied some great balls and Lana Harch as well. It was always going to be difficult on this pitch, but the girls adapted well."

Australian Youth : Pichon, McShea (c), Attwill (Saville), May (Collins), McCallum, Munoz, Davison, Stocco (Canham), Harch, Dunne (McLaughlin), Cannuli (Slatyer).

On the adjacent field, a tight battle was fought out between NSW Institute of Sport and Vietnam's senior national team, the physical strength of the taller locals proving the difference in the end.

The contest was fairly even for the opening half hour, and NSWIS keeper Dimitra Poulos made two fantastic saves. The deadlock was finally broken from the penalty spot by Anissa Tann-Darby in the second half after the lively Michelle Carney was fouled in the box. The lead was then doubled when Jessica Palmer came in on the far post eight minutes later.

Carney proved a handful for the Vietnam defence, whilst Tann-Darby, Leah Blayney, Tara McMinn, Hayley Todd, and Lorissa Stevens all performed well for the Institute.

Ex-Australian National Coach Steve Darby, now Head Coach of Vietnam, said of the game, "It was a fair result, a great battle. They were too powerful, and of course won everything in the air. But it was a great game for us to play."

REMAINING FIXTURES

Tue 7 August		
4.00pm	Pluim Park	Singapore v Vietnam
7.30pm	North Power Stadium	Young Matildas v NSWIS
Thu 9 August		
5.30pm	Pluim Park	Singapore v NSWIS
7.30pm	North Power Stadium	Young Matildas v Vietnam
Sat 11 August		
12noon	North Power Stadium	layoff 3rd v 4th
2.00pm	North Power Stadium	Playoff 1st v 2nd

BOURNEMOUTH'S AUSSIE 'WICKET' KEEPER

• Youth Profile •

By Mark Stavroulakis

At the tender age of 17, young Aussie goalkeeper, Dimitri Brinias has accomplished alot in his short career.

Young Dimitri is currently playing his football at second division outfit Bournemouth, playing and training with the first team squad. He's also been invited to trial with the U17 Joeys squad bound, for Trinidad & Tobago in September.

Young Brinias started off his playing career as a goalkeeper at the now deceased West Adelaide Sharks. He spent a season there as a thirteen year-old and explains it was love at first sight with the game he played best, being football.

"I really enjoyed playing my football from a young age as I couldn't wait to get onto that pitch and do what I did best. I spent a year with the Sharks before I moved to South Australian Premier League side Port Adelaide Lions. I played in their U19, 23 and first team squads as a fourteen year old before departing Australia," said the former Fulham Gardens resident.

As a youngster, young 'Dimi' always wanted to play football overseas. The English Premier League was one such league that the South Australian lad always wanted to play in. "The English style, its passion and the atmosphere was brilliant to watch on the television. It was one league that I hoped to play in, in the future," said the young gun.

Dimitri's first representative honor came in the form of playing for his state in the U14's National titles held in Adelaide. "It was a great feeling playing for your state as you were on a national stage.

During our games, many people were present from either Australia or abroad, who were interested in signing future prospects. Unfortunately, we didn't go well in the Nationals, losing out in the group stages, but I was sighted by a couple of clubs from England, who offered me trials", said the lanky goalkeeper.

New English Premiership side Fulham, Southampton and Division two outfit Bournemouth expressed their interests in the young Aussie star by offering him trials at their respective clubs.

"As a 14-year-old, it was tough at first to travel twenty something hours by plane, and endure all the traveling. I got used to it however, and the dream of me playing in England was very close. I trailed really well at Southampton and they had asked me back, but I felt as though it would have been pretty tough for me to establish myself, as the club had a few goalkeepers. I didn't end up trailing for Fulham due to the reason of being situated in the heart of London, the lifestyle was to be too much for me.

I had really successful trials at Bournemouth, and while I was there, the club looked after me really well. The place itself reminded me of home, and through a couple of friendly matches, I signed an apprentice contract that lasted till I was 17, and only recently signed a professional contract for two years. I also saw this club as a stepping-stone towards my career, as I had more of an opportunity to establish myself as a first team member", said the Bournemouth star.

As a fresh faced 15-year-old, the task of living in England by himself was a huge responsibility, especially for someone so young.

"My first season for Bournemouth was really good actually. It was tough at first, settling into the town, but due to my Greek background, the club had found me a Greek Family to live with. It made life a bit easier, in the sense that while I was in Adelaide, I'd speak to my parents in Greek, so having Greek people around me was great.

Life itself changed for the better, as my parents both sold their businesses in Adelaide and settled in Bournemouth as well. Having them and my brother Anastasi (currently plays in Bournemouth's Youth team) by me side, made life easier" said Brinias.

Current coach of Bournemouth Sean O'Driscoll has the task of guiding his side to the Division One next season, and young Dimitri believes that this will happen.

"The coach and team have bonded really well, especially now through pre-season, all is ready for a big year. I've been looked after really well, the pitches are quality and the coaching is great, hopefully this season will be the year I get my first grade debut. The club has also built a new twelve thousand capacity stadium, so everything is in order for a huge year", said Dimitri.

Dimitri Brinias: Aussie-born, goalkeeper with a growing reputation in England.

Australia has been renowned for nurturing goalkeeper talent, and like so many quality keepers overseas, young Brinias hopes to be a star as well. "At the moment, I'm really concentrating on getting a first team start this season. I am the youngest in the squad, but that makes me more determined in striving for more," said Brinias.

International duties have been also a figure in young Dimitris' career, as at the moment, he's one of thirty lads trailing in Canberra for the U17 Joey squad. However, young Brinias' has been involved in playing International football as well.

"Last year I received a call from the Greek F.A. saying that they wanted me to take part in a non FIFA tournament for the U17 Greek side. I wanted to see how it was, and really wanted to play international football. Although I was thankful for playing in this tournament, I did not want to pursue my international career with Greece.

I was really happy when I got the call-up to trial with the Joeys and now that I got it, I'll do all that I can to cement a first team spot. I'm very confident, with my two years of professional football experience, I'm gunning for a place in the squad. It would be the biggest honor representing my country, Australia, in a World Cup", concluded the Joey Hopeful.

CHEERS KELLY!

Congrats to outstanding Coach of the NSWIS Kelly Cross, who had a bouncing baby boy, Charlie recently. Hoping Charlie will grow to become a big, big soccer star.

WOLVES BACK IN TRAINING

Back-to-back NSL Champions the Wollongong Wolves reported in for their first training run of the new season on Sunday morning.

There were plenty of new faces among the boys, including new signings Sean Babic, Buddy Farah, Alex Castro and Naum Sekulovski.

Also present were two of the latest Socceroo debutantes and Wolves Player of the Year Paul Reid, as well as last season's top scorer Saso Petrovski.

Wolves Coach Ron Corry has also invited plenty of triallists to the Wolves pre-season as he looks to further strengthen his squad for the up-coming NSL campaign.

WOLVES SCHEDULE THIS WEEK

TUESDAY 7 AUG
Training at Brandon Park 4:30 p.m.
THURSDAY 9 AUG
Training at Brandon Park 4:30 p.m.
FRIDAY 10 AUG
Training at Brandon Park 4:30 p.m.
SUNDAY AUG 12
Training at Brandon Park 9:00 a.m.

'KNOP'S VICTORY, GOOD RESULT FOR SOCCER'

By Bert van Bedaf

It was a counter-coup, if ever there was one. As one source close to last Saturday's momentous meeting said, "(Tony) Labbozzetta didn't know what hit him."

A shattered Labbozzetta, commenting on being dumped as chairman of Soccer Australia and failing to gain a board position on the weekend, said he "felt betrayed" and his role in the game was now "non-existent".

The latter was something that an army of soccer fans and supporters indicated weeks ago, when Labbozzetta was booed at the NSL grand final in Sydney.

Few such signs of public humiliation, and a call to depart, exist, but the booing of the (former governor-general) late Sir John Kerr at the Melbourne Cup, after the 1975 sacking of prime-minister Gough Whitlam, springs to mind.

Labbozzetta was under pressure from sustained attacks in the "Australian" newspaper, a pending court case in Sydney concerning an apprehended violence order at his club Marconi (he needs to appear on August 21), a scathing report on SBS, mounting financial problems, around $25 million, at the Marconi club, allegations of "jobs for the boys" and from a damning vote of "no confidence" in him by the Soccer Australia board.

Labbozzetta was confident he would have the numbers the oust the existing board, stacked against him, and put his own people in place through a series of motions last Saturday. He did not succeed. Instead, he got rolled himself.

His opening motion that "all current directors (are) to be removed", was amended to ensure existing board members survived, apart from independent member Cheryl Bart and Labbozzetta.

The motion was carried 39-20, with one abstention, and Labbozzetta was out. The election of Ian Knop as chairman was taken hard by Labbozzetta, who had regarded Knop as inside his camp. But Knop had changed his mind in the face of so many controversies, allegations and negative reports that had embroiled Labbozzetta.

When the deposed chairman referred to the fact there may have been "more than one Judas" in his camp, Knop was an obvious target.

Nevertheless, the dethroning of Australia's biggest soccer politician after a reign of 30 years, has opened the game up to a new horizon.

Knop's election was welcomed in Victoria.

"This is a good result for soccer," Victorian Soccer Federation chairman Manny Galanos said.

"This is the first time in the last 20 years that the board and chairman are unified and are committed for the better cause of the game," he said.

Galanos rejected any notion that Knop was a stop-gap appointment.

Ian Knop: "... not an interim appointment. I expect him to be chairman for the next three to five years."

"Knop is not an interim appointment. I expect him to be chairman for the next three to five years," Galanos said.

The face of soccer has changed, but there's still a lot of politics to wash through the stable before it is cleaned.

Former liberal NSW premier Nick Greiner is expected to succeed former Labor NSW premier Neville Wran as Soccer Australia president.

Power behind the counter-coup, former Victorian premier Jeff Kennett is waiting in the wings to play a prominent role in the world game. He favors for Soccer Australia to adopt an independent board on similar lines as the Australian Football League.

There may be a new king on throne, but the fight for the roundball code in Australia is far from over.

Victoria's SA board member Brondolino declined to comment on last Saturday's events. It was conveyed, he wanted to "sit down with the board first and assess the situation."

New chairman Knop was a guest at last night's Victorian Premier League's best and fairest awards.

Krncevic banks on youths in South revival

By Bert van Bedaf

South Melbourne appointed former Carlton and Marconi coach Eddie Krncevic as its new coach for two seasons last week. He will be in charge of what will essentially become a youth revival at the lakeside club.

"It has been an unsettling time at South, but Eddie (Krncevic) is experienced and we look forward to him helping us on the park," said South captain Paul Trimboli, who's believed to have been critical of the appointment.

Faced with an exodus of several senior players - not to mention to controversial defection of coach Mike Petersen to the Football Kingz - and a depleted treasury, South Melbourne is embarking on a rebuilding phase by way of promoting youth.

It's up to Krncevic to perform the magician's trick of accomplishing the transition while maintaining South's winning reputation.

"South Melbourne has a tradition of playing an attacking brand of soccer and that's not going to change under me," Krncevic said.

He will be re-united with his former assistant and youth coach at Carlton, Jeff Olver. The former Socceroo and NSL goal keeper has been filling the youth role at South for the last season and a bit.

Krncevic parted company with Marconi after two seasons after the Stallions were knocked out of the finals in the second round this season.

He also got the Stallions in the finals the previous season, but, by Marconi standards, the Stallions under-performed and Krcevic was axed.

A former overseas star and trailblazer for the hundred-plus Australian players now earning a living in Europe, Krncevic had successful stints at various European clubs including top side Anderlecht, where he became Belgium's top scorer in 1989.

A former Socceroo of 35 games, Krncevic returned to Australia in 1996 to play a season at Eastern Pride under Frank Arok before taking up as inaugural coach at now defunct club Carlton in 1997.

He took Carlton to the grand final in the 1997-98 season and lost to South Melbourne then coached by Ange Postecoglou. He stayed at Carlton for another season before being replaced by Stuart Munro, who coached Carlton until the club collapsed last December.

Krncevic was also considered by South in 1997, but Postecoglou took charge, winning back-to-back championships before leaving to become national youth coach before the start of last season, when Petersen took over. Petersen took South to a minor premiership and a losing grand final against Wollongong last season.

Krncevic may find the going tough at Melbourne's premier club. It won't be easy to produce equivalent success (to his predecessors) at South, which has lost several key players.

He will be without a string of top guns, including 'keeper Michael Petkovic, Goran Lozanovski and Simon Colosimo, who've gone to Europe.

Others who have left are Con Boutsianis, Andy Vlahos and Vas Lalogeracos, who have followed Petersen to the Kingz. Veteran striker John Anastasiadis has retired.

Nevertheless, Krncevic is confident he can do well at South with a comprehensive youth policy and make the top six next season.

"Concentrating on youth development is the way to go. There's still a strong core of experienced players at the club and a position in the top six is a realistic target," Krncevic said.

BILL TURNER CUP

Round 4

Kirwan	4	Cairns	1
St Brendans Yeppoon	2	Holy Spirit Mackay	0
Kawana Waters	2	Gympie	1
Toowoomba Grammar	2	Stanthorpe	1
Corinda	3	St Laurence	0
Cavendish Road	2	St Josephs Gregory Terrace	1
Oxley	2	Duval	0
St Josephs Banora	2	Toormina	1
Lambton	2	St Peters Maitland	0
Kincumber	3	St Edwards Gosford	0
St Francis Xavier	2	Belconnen	0
Daramalan	2	Radford College	2 (4-3 pens)
Griffith College	2	Notre Dame Shepparton	0
Kooringal	7	Tumut	2

Round 5

Killara	1	Holy Cross Ryde	0
Menai	2	James Cook Boys	1
Concord	3	DLS Ashfield	1
St Francis Xavier	3	Daramalan	1
Bathurst	2	Dubbo	1
Griffith Catholic	4	Kooringal	0
Holy Spirit Bellambi	7	Albion Park	0
Kirwan	9	St Brendans Yeppoon	0
Kawana Waters	5	Narangba Valley	0
Corinda	3	Toowoomba Grammar	0
Palm Beach Currumbin	2	Cavendish Road	0
Hunter Sports	2	Kincumber	1

FAIRFIELD BULLS SOCCER CLUB

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE

Under 19s

COACH WANTED

Applications close on 31st August, 2001.

Must have Level 2 Senior Licence. All applications must include all other relevant qualifications.

Applications to be sent to:

The Secretary
Fairfield Bulls Soccer Club
P.O. Box 400
BONNYRIGG. NSW. 2177.

Letters to the Editor

'SOCCER', A MISNOMER

Dear Sir,

If the board which controls the "World Game" in this country ever get around to attracting the masses to the game, the first thing needed is to drop this Americanised "Soccer" tag.

Of the 260-plus countries in the FIFA family, only two are controlled by Soccer Federations. Even American Samoa is run by a Football Association.

England has not got one Soccer club. "Soccer" pools are based on UK "Football" results. To the majority of Australians, "Soccer" is just another way to describe what in the fifties was called "Wog Ball" and has nothing in common with the world game — football.

Vic Heath,
Duffy. ACT.

Australia's National side requires its own Ashes Series.

SOCCEROOS NEED OWN 'ASHES'

Dear Sir,

Besides being an unashamed obsessive of the world game, I don't mind admitting I am also prepared to cheer on anything else Australia participates in.

In fact, I would be willing to watch a snail race should one of the competitors have an Aussie flag draped over its shell. OK, a bit melodramatic, but you get my drift.

It is quite clear however, the majority of Australians are of the same ilk, when it comes to waving the Southern Cross or the boxing kangaroo for their beloved country in a sporting arena.

Perhaps it's because we seem to win at most things us Aussies put our hands or feet to that we get drawn in, plus the fact we can take defeat on the chin when it actually occurs.

Which brings me to the reason why I put this comment piece together.

Like those very same millions of sports fans around our great nation, I was full of praise for the recent Australian Wallabies success against the British and Irish Lions.

To come back from a Test down and to clinch the Tom Richards trophy 2-1 in such a valiant manner prompted me to puff out the chest and punch the air with joy, as well as dribble a few bars of "Waltzing Matilda" over a can of Heineken.

So, the question has to be asked; since it was deemed to be a most successful tour, why can't there be a similar tournament for a combined United Kingdom Soccer team; say on a once every four-year basis?

Other countries will still visit our shores, but this is a little different. There were tens of thousands of Lions fans who travelled half-way around the world along with their team from the United Kingdom for the ten-game itinerary and no doubt many also managed to catch up with immigrated friends and relations.

According to the Australian Financial Review, this very same multitude of scarlet-shirted visitors pumped a staggering $250 million into the national economy during the six weeks they were here. NSW is believed to have reaped $100 million, while Queensland and Victoria each raked in $75 million apiece.

As a tour entrepreneur said, "This was a lesson on the powerful economic benefit generated by event tourism".

Can you imagine a similar scenario for our great game? Since the Lions tag has already been taken, they could be perhaps dubbed the Bulldogs; the mascot used for the 1966 World Cup.

Admittedly, the Soccer calendar, especially in Europe, is forever embroiled in a fixture gridlock, but I am sure people like Socceroos coach Frank Farina and our high-profile players, would relish the thought of playing an ongoing 'Ashes' series in a similar manner as cricket. Especially when it is only going to be played at home every eight years.

We are no longer a Soccer nation that is looked down upon, since we are now able to compete with the footballing cream, as the recent Confederations Cup proved.

The thought of a Socceroos — Bulldogs test series, with it's tourism and merchandising opportunities certainly makes the heart race and the mouth salivate; but sadly, such promising innovations are infrequently considered.

Perhaps it's because the influential superiors from the respective governing bodies are more concerned about protecting their position and the trepidation of looking a fool, than to give something like this serious consideration.

Richard Kreider,
Cloverdale, WA.

Giving a dog a bad name ...

Dear Sir,

I am writing this letter in regards to the SBS program Insight. I was totally at a loss about some statements made by the people that were interviewed on the same program.

How could people criticise the estwhile chairman of Soccer Australia, Tony Labbozzetta?

Since he took up the reins as chairman there has been some terrific results gained at Socceroo level. Bear in mind that he had only been occupying this position for such a short time.

To my knowledge he had done a very fine job considering the knives in the back he had been getting from his fellow colleagues. Let me say something about these so called experts concerned about our game.

Firstly about Mr Woods. He should be ashamed of himself in his capacity as deputy chairman of Soccer Australia to be causing these problems of stirring-up some of the other board members.

I feel that he is very biased towards ethnics anyway. Then to Robbie Slater — he talks about Decency in the game. Does he know that since he has been back from England he has not had a decent season himself?

But we paid decent money to watch him play some crap. Same goes for Craig Foster.

He came back because he was desperate for a game. He also did not perform either. We paid for your crap too. Then come one of the three wise man — Jeff Kenneth talking about personalities. Imagine this golfer being boss of Soccer Australia.

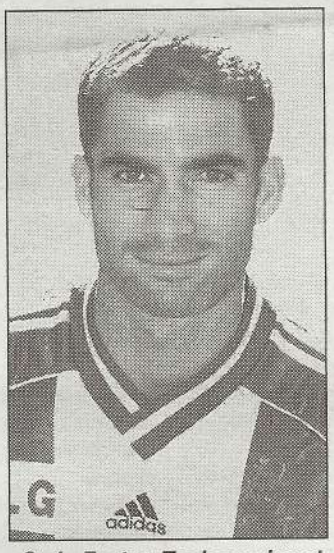
This man shows huge amount of bias against NSW that if he ever gets the job there will not be a National competition because all the teams from NSW will be gone. As for Con Monteleone he had some good points and some constructive criticism.

On Remo Nagarratto talking about sad issues, I totally agree with him because his soccer career was as good as his political one. To Alan Sunderland — all of your questions were expertly answered by the man you have questioned. So to all these pack of whingers, (negatively so) give the chairman a go and if he does not deliver then it's time to go. But then all the people involved on the Soccer pitch (players) like Slater and Foster should first perform themselves. (That's if they can stay on the field).

Players like them won't come cheap even though their trade overseas was washed up awhile ago. And Robbie don't forget, we are still paying decent money to watch you perform — if you are still able to do so? So let us all construct and not destruct.

John Potts,
Newcastle, NSW.

Tony Labbozzetta: Unfairly criticised.



Craig Foster: Took a swipe at Soccer Australia.

Too much Rugby, not enough Soccer!

Dear Sir,

Yours Truly is going overseas in the next few days for several weeks and looking forward to open a newspaper not saturated with Rugby League stories.

Some of the rather farcical League reading points to jamming the code down everybody's throat rather than being promotional.

One cannot buy a local paper without being overfed by Rugby League news from U/6s to so called Legends.

I often wonder why good old MURDOCH still pumps money (and we are talking millions of dollars), into a declining code, a corpse which is not only dead but rotten already.

To go to Europe and open a local paper without Rugby League insignificant news readings is a tremendous relief, something to look forward to next to a sightseeing holiday.

Luckily, most young boys now realise that the so-called "greatest game of all", is not so great if some dangerous lifelong injury stops their career.

Parents have more sense than sending their youngsters into such codes.

Glancing through some of the items written by rugby league journalists, it is doubtful if they believe the stuff themselves or are foced by higher powers to write and promote the sport as much as possible, in order to sell their papers.

Anyway, I'm looking forward to a rugby league-free few weeks ahead.

Otto Bader,
Warilla, NSW.

Are these friendlies necessary?

Dear Sir,

Is Frank Farina serious about the upcoming fixtures against Japan, the Solomon Islands and Latvia?

I can't possibly understand the logic in this, especially so close to that crucial World Cup qualifier against South American opposition.

Yes, Japan would be an excellent and most challenging opposition if two things happen:

We provided our FULL strength squad (European based players included), and forget the NSL hopeful's who we all know won't get a look in come November.

The Japanese played their strongest team including their European based players and provide an intimidating atmosphere like the one at the Confederations Cup final.

This of course has not occurred. Farina will send across a 'Mickey Mouse' squad to play in a 'Mickey Mouse' game and the only outcome will be that we get slaughtered by the fit Japanese national team who have just completed their domestic season.

This fixture yet again, (like the Colombia debacle), serves no purpose and is a complete waste of money and time.

After taking one step forward with a successful Confederations Cup campaign, Farina and Soccer Australia are taking a giant leap backwards. What a slap in the face.

And three days later the Australian team will play the Solomon Islands with a number of Youth team players!

Would someone please explain this one to me? Is Soccer Australia serious about qualifying for the World Cup or not? I hope they don't think that the cricket score Australia should amass will provide enough momentum to roll a South American powerhouse.

This is a very important and crucial time for Australian Soccer and we can't afford to waste valuable time and money on these 'B' grade fixtures.

Oh and also, out of all the European teams you choose to play against traditional Soccer 'giants' Latvia, who with a lofty FIFA ranking of 95 would probably declare a national holiday if they beat us.

Let the alarm bells start ringing

P. Wallsend
Kent Town, SA.

OFF THE CROSSBAR

By Allan Crisp

GREEN AND GOLD SET TO MARCH

Can you imagine a 10,000 strong cheer squad belting out their best in support of our national team as they strive to qualify for World Cup finals glory?

Too often the Socceroos have played "away" games at home, due to the fact that the visiting support has outnumbered the locals.

The notable exception to that rule was the Australia-Iran second leg World Cup final at the MCG when the atmosphere generated by the 85,000 crowd was electric and definitely favoured the Socceroos.

But, to have a massive support group concentrated in the Southern Stand of the MCG when Australia clashes with the fifth-placed South American nation, is the worthy aim of a unit calling itself the "Green and Gold Army."

Provided the cheer squad is well organised and efficiently led, it could inspire the entire crowd to join in a truly supportive spirit of the huge occasion.

The group intends to spread its net to embrace all of our national teams. Interested parties from around the country should log on to www.greengoldarmy.com.

The invitation was first extended on the South Australia Soccernews website, with the organisers pleading thus — "Show your true colous ñ back the Green and Gold Army.

"Australian soccer is about to embark into a new era of success and unprecedented popularity following the success of our Socceroos.

With World Cup qualification within touching distance, the time has never been more critical for fans of soccer in this country to become united behind the team that could bring our nation to compete on the grandest stage of them all.

For too long, Australian fans have had to suffer. Show your true colours and join the Green and Gold Army.

The Green and Gold Army has been set up to provide Australian national sides with the support they deserve. After decades of neglect by fans, administrators and the media, Australia's national sides are finally getting some attention.

The Green and Gold Army is the supporters group for all of the national sides — the Socceroos, Olyroos, Young Socceroos, Joey's and the Matildas.

The Green and Gold Army has been devised for the fans so that there is no repeat of the 1998 World Cup and 2000 Sydney Olympics.

We aim to provide a level of national support never seen before in this country.

Whenever the Socceroos play a big home game they manage to attract over 75,000 people, but the atmosphere never matches the crowd.

Our aim is to join all those supporters into one concentrated effort that makes Wembley seem like a social game at the park.

Our aim is for 10,000 mad and crazy soccer lovers to join together in the Southern Stand of the MCG and cheer home the boys as we progress to the World Cup for the first time since 1974.

Join us so we can become the official supporters' club of Australian soccer.

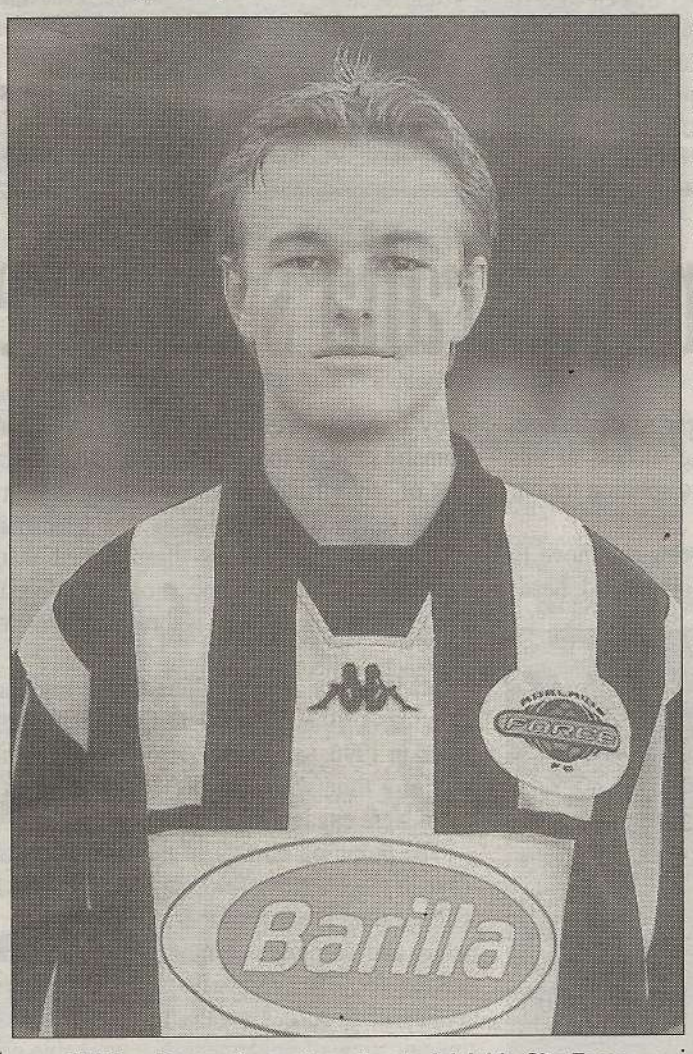
It's up to you." — That web site again — www.greengoldarmy.com.

KING KEMP RETURNS

Matthew Kemp, the Canberra kid who was a stunning success in his first season with Adelaide City Force, is back with the SA club.

Kemp, 20, won City's Rookie of The Year award in season 2000 before being released to Italian club Empoli, which on loaned the midfielder to Serie C club Spal.

He encountered language difficulties with the Spal coach and was given precious little opportunity to show his wares.



Matthew Kemp: Second coming to Adelaide City Force.

Kemp reported to City coach Zoran Matic penultimate Saturday and is eager to renew his friendship with his former team-mates.

"The Force kept in contact with me while I was in Italy and they managed to secure my release from my two-year contract with Spal," Kemp said.

Matic, back from a rare holiday in Darwin, said, "There is some optimism in the air at the club."

Matic said that City president Bob D'Ottavi, who has been in Italy speaking to potential sponsors, has extended his stay and is now scheduled to return on August 19.

Asked to comment on D'Ottavi's progress, Matic said, "You work towards gaining something and sometimes you get what you want and other times you don't reach your goal."

One of the first things Matic did on his return was to meet with his assistant coaches, Sergio Melta and Carlo Talladira and the club's Premier League coach Neville Flounders.

"I asked them and all of the junior division coaches to give me recommendations of the players they believe should be added to the NSL training squad," Matic said.

And, at press time, Matic was negotiating with Force skipper Aurelio Vidmar for a renewal of his contract.

CLUB LINKS

Do Australian clubs need international club links? Adelaide Olympic Football Club official George Ladas asks that question in his searching match program editorial.

"The improving profile of Australian soccer throughout the world is manifest in a number of ways - An improving FIFA national team ranking, increasing profile of Australian players such as Mark Viduka, Harry Kewell, Paul Okon and Brett Emerton and promising wins over Scotland, Mexico, France and Brazil." Writes George.

"However, an interesting manifestation of the perception of Australia as a developer of great player talent, is the increasing links forged between overseas clubs and Australian clubs.

"We all know about the involvement of Rangers FC at Northern Spirit. There is also West Ham's involvement with Blacktown City, while recently we have seen Manchester United link up with Parramatta Melita Eagles and Derby County linking up with Box Hill Junior Club in Victoria.

"There is also talk of Olympiakos linking up with South Melbourne, Leeds United with Brisbane Strikers and NSW club Dulwich Hill with FC Porto.

"In the past, West Adelaide tried to forge a link with Manchester United. "But, is this a good thing for Aussie soccer?

"Is this beneficial thing for our young players or is it a raping of our young talent? "Does this benefit our national team or does it reduce our national competition to a third rate domestic league?"

Good question George! The answer to which will not be conclusive until Australian clubs are able to match the wages paid by our overseas rivals, or are they our partners?

But, that's another question!

BUZZING COUSINS

The Mullen cousins will be rivals when the National Schools Soccer Championships are played in Queensland this month.

Daniel, son of Bulleen Zebras coach Joe Mullen, will be fronting up for Victoria, while Matthew, son of Peter Mullen, will be representing South Australia.

Former Youth Socceroo, South Australian and Adelaide City champion, Joe, is hoping to catch up with brother Peter, who was an outstanding defender with SA club, Enfield Victoria (now Enfield Falcons).

Allan Crisp can be heard on the 5RPH (1197AM) Marshall Thompson Homes/Pacific Real Estate Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7am-8.30am, along with Croydon Kings coach Phil Scardigno, Peter Millar, The Advertiser soccer writer Meno Toutsidis and producer Robbie Popplestone.

Former Australian international John Perin, Crisp and Millar gather for the SOS (Soccer on Sunday program each Sabbath from 8.30am-9.30am to present the latest local, overseas and interstate news, information and interviews.

Deakin rues NSW League miss

By Graham Cooke

Canberra Deakin are disappointed but not disheartened over their failed bid to win a place in the NSW Premier League this summer, coach Vlado Horvat says.

Speaking after his team had returned to the top of the ACT Premiership with a 5-0 win over Monaro, Horvat vowed club officials would explore other ways of bringing an improved quality of football to Deakin Oval.

It is the second year in succession that NSW authorities have slammed the door on Deakin. The Canberra club applied to become a founding member of the Premier League in 2000, but the ACT spot in the 10-team competition went to Belconnen Blue Devils.

With the league extended to 12 teams for the second season, Deakin had high hopes of success this time round, but the additional places went to Sydney clubs Fairfield Bulls and Bankstown City Lions.

Horvat said the club would now press for inclusion in the National Youth League - although he agreed time was short — but also floated the idea that Deakin seek membership of the NSW winter competition.

Vlado Horvat: "There's still the possibility of automatic promotion."

"After all, it now has two vacancies," he said. "There is also the possibility of automatic promotion and relegation between the summer and winter leagues, so that may be the way forward for us."

He rejected the suggestion there is not enough soccer talent in Canberra to support the Canberra Cosmos, Belconnen and Deakin in high-level competition. "The availability of good players depends on the quality of coaching and a clear path to a higher level of football," he said.

"If these are present, then the number of players will expand to fill the gaps."

South Australia Premier League Results

ROUND 19

PREMIER LEAGUE

Modbury Jets	4	Raiders	0
(Yates 2, Harris, Crowl)			
Adelaide City	2	White City	2
(Carter, Saraceno)		(Armour, Petrov)	
Metro Stars	0	Campelltown	3
		(Udagawa, Monterosso, Crisci)	
Port Lion	1	Croydon Kings	0
(Misailidis)			
Blue Eagles	2	Playford Patriots	1
(Artone, Brooks)		(Kidd)	
Olympic FC	5	Port Pirie Spirit	0
(Morakis 2, Parrisos 2, tog)			

STATE LEAGUE

Western Strikers	3	(Seaford Surfers	0
(Vinci 2, Perrotta)			
Northern Demons	1	Hills Hawks	0
(Cerrachio)			
Salisbury Apaches	1	Cumberland Foxes	1
(Groth)		(Raponi)	
Cobras	1	Panthers	2
(Bouzoudis)		(O'Dell, Honeysett)	
Birkalla	6	Para Hills Knights	0
(McGregor 3, Westervelt, Alagich, Tsekinis)			
Noarlunga Bulldogs	2	Enfield Falcons	1
(Sephton, Higham)		(Waller)	

ROUND 20

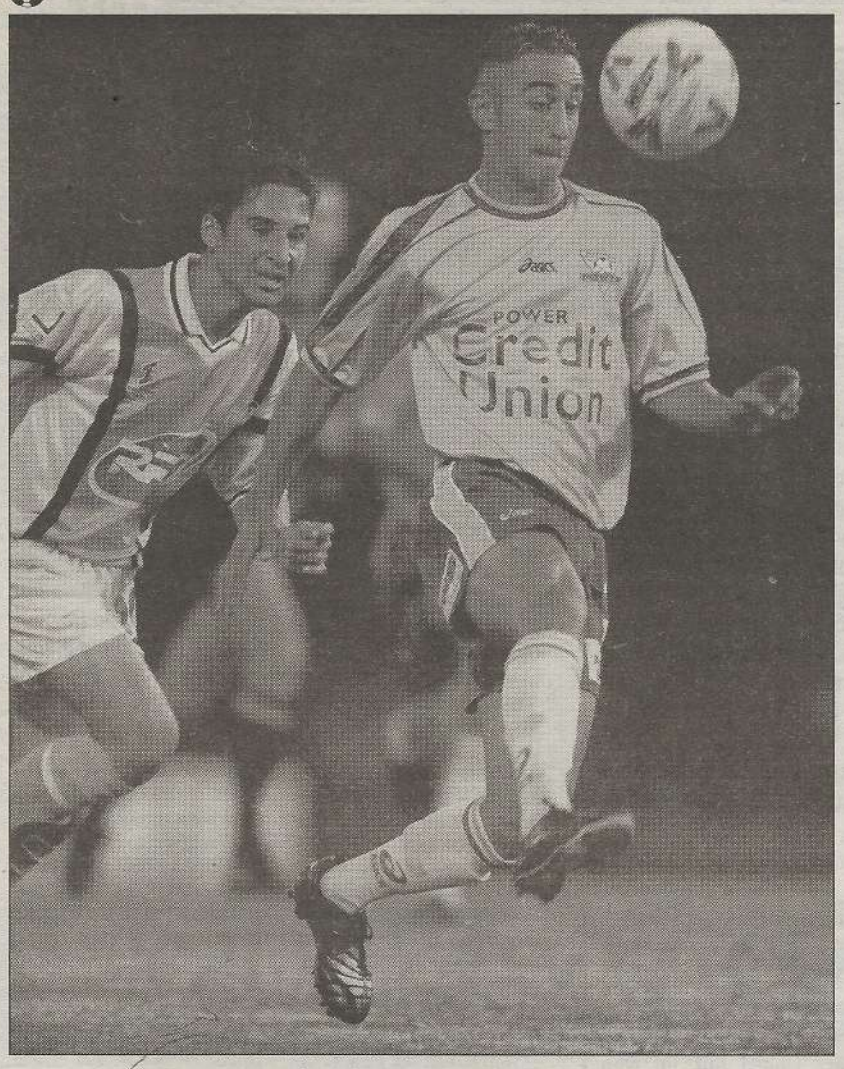
PREMIER LEAGUE

SATURDAY, AUGUST 11

Port Pirie Spirit v Blue Eagles
Playford Patriots v Port Lion
Croydon Kings v Modbury Jets
Raiders v Metro Stars
Campbelltown v White City
Olympic FC v Adelaide City

STATE LEAGUE

Enfield Falcons v Birkalla
Para Hills Knights v Cobra
Panthers v Salisbury Apaches
Cumberland v Northern Demons
Hills Hawks v Seaford
Noarlunga v Western Strikers



Ahmed Elrich (right): "... to get this far is an honour."

SOCCEROO SUMMONS SHOCK ELRICH, BRYNES

Parramatta Power's rising youngsters Mark Byrnes and Ahmad Elrich are shocked at being named in the Socceroos squad of 25, preparing to play Solomon Islands national side later in the month.

The duo, both 20, received a call from Socceroos' manager Ross Musso last week inviting them to join the squad for a 3-day camp at Valentine Park, Blacktown on Thursday, August 9.

Byrnes said it was his life-long dream to be part of the Socceroos. "This is a real shock because I don't think I played very well at the under-20s World Cup," Byrnes said. "It's an exciting time and I'm really looking forward to the challenge."

"It's a great opportunity at such a young age to be asked to attend a Socceroos camp," Mr Musso said.

"I have to applaud Frank Farina for using this tournament against Japan and the Solomon Islands to look at the level of young talent."

Elrich, a Power right wingback, and Byrnes, a Power defender, said it was an accomplishment to be asked to represent Australia at the elite level.

Mark Byrnes: "This is a real shock."

"It doesn't matter if I don't make the final squad because to get this far is an honour," Elrich said. "This is an opportunity to show Frank what we can do and also learn as much as possible from the other Socceroos."

Musso said they were likely to be involved in the game against the Solomon Islands on 20 August.

Parramatta's Head Coach David Mitchell has also congratulated the pair, saying they had worked hard over the last few years.

CHELSEA, FULHAM OFFER TRAVIS TRIALS

Talented 19 year-old MSC Liverpool goalkeeper, Travis Glen, has been offered trials with English Premier League glamour clubs, Chelsea and Fulham. The former Sydney Olympic and Sutherland Shire junior will complete his NSW Winter Super League commitments with MSC Liverpool before jetting to England on the 14th of August.

Glen will spend one week at Stamford Bridge before a fortnight with Jean Tigana's ambitious Fulham. The teenager was counting down the days before his date with destiny: "It's only eleven days to go before I head off to fulfil an ambition that I've had since I was eight years-old. To train with world-class players such as Mark Bosnich, Edwin Van der Sar and Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink is the chance of a lifetime."

The upcoming trials, which were arranged through his agent and goalkeeping coach, has seen Glen switch from part-time to full-time training in order to impress in England. "I was working 55 hours a week and that was impacting on my training. So I decided to approach these trials as professionally as possible, starting with devoting all my time to goalkeeper training. I train 2-3 times a day, get plenty of rest and make sure I'm eating the right foods. I was driving to Valentine Sports Park yesterday and was thinking yeah, this is what I want to do for the rest of my life'."

VSF Kicks against Soccer Australia's changes

The Victorian Soccer Federation has received many mails from soccer supporters throughout the country, urging the VSF and other stakeholders in the sport, to vote against the proposal to remove the current board and replace them with a group headed by the current Chairman, Tony Labbozetta.

The VSF, like the rest of the soccer world in Australia, has been concerned with the turmoil that has been very evident at Soccer Australia throughout this year. However, the VSF does not support the solution that has been proposed by some states, encouraged by the estwhile Chairman, Tony Labozetta, to remove Directors who do not agree with him on all issues.

VSF Chairman, Manny Galanos said last week, "the proposed solution that will be put to a meeting of stakeholders on Saturday, of removing the current Board and leaving in place a Board of Directors that have been hand-picked by Tony Labozetta, will not inspire confidence amongst the general public and corporate community."

"(Last) Saturday's proposal represents no more than a change of personnel within a governance structure that is fundamentally flawed. The potential of any individual operating within the current structure, as dictated by the Soccer Australia constitution, is very limited and the success of this coup will only serve as a band aid solution for our sport's governance."

"The VSF will not be supporting the move to replace the current board with a new board, headed by Tony Labbozetta. One of the targets for this dramatic stunt, is Joe Brondolino, who is independent of any affiliation with a stakeholder group, having resigned his position as VSF Chairman."

Manny Galanos: VSF President.

"Naturally, the VSF is disappointed that the ongoing contribution to soccer of this independent Soccer Australia director, is threatened this weekend.

Paradoxically, Joe Brondolino made his mark as Chairman of the independent Commission established in 1996, to oversee Victorian soccer, taking over at a time when the previous Chairman and board were engaged in a bitter conflict."

"The proposed ousting of the current board, to leave in place a group selected by Tony Labozetta, will not send the sort of message that the general public and corporate community are desperately looking for. The VSF will encourage all stakeholders of Soccer Australia to take a long term strategic view of implementing a workable governance structure."

**This press release was issued last week, before the General Meeting of Soccer Australia held over the weekend in Sydney.*

ACT PLAYERS TO TOUR CHINA

By Graham Cooke

Canberra will be sending two junior teams to the Chinese capital of Beijing in September – part of the growing relationship between the two cities.

Tour director Damien Beck said the party would consist of under-19 boys and under-15 girls teams. "There will be 16 in each squad and they will each play six games in China," he said. "In addition, the boys have a game against the youth team of the Happy Valley club, in Hong Kong, on the way home."

The tour was the result of a standing invitation from the Beijing Football Association. "They have been asking us to go for three years," he said.

"Obviously the fact that Canberra and Beijing are now officially sister cities has given some impetus to our plans and we believe this will be the beginning of regular two-way contacts. Our one difficulty at the moment is finding sponsorship. We are all working hard to raise money for the trip."

The party would include the chairman of the ACT Junior League, John Murray Wilcox. The manager of the girls' team, Judith Clark, was also a vice-president of Soccer Canberra. "It will be a pretty high-powered group," he said.

"The matches will be against school and representative sides and we will play a game every two days, interspersed with sightseeing.

"We've been told that as the games are played around the Chinese National Day on October 1 a lot of people will be on holiday, so there is likely to be plenty of spectators at the games. This could mean playing before crowds of 40,000 or more, which would be "scary" for the youngsters, he said.

The party leaves for Beijing on September 27 and arrives back in Canberra on October 12.

Kevin Muscat: Attracting interest from Birmingham despite hate-slur.

Knights' Cervinski, Kiwis Fisher & Cartwright join Spirit

Northern Spirit completed its major signings for the 2001/02 National Soccer League last week, with the acquisition of prolific Melbourne Knights striker Adrian Cervinski.

Cervinski joins former Sydney Olympic striker Pablo Cardozo and Kiwi teenager Brent Fisher in Spirit's new-look strike force that also includes Tony Perinich and Ryan Griffiths.

Brent Fisher, a New Zealand U20 international, was also signed by Northern Spirit on a one-year contract.The youngster has henceforth been plating for New Zealand side, Christchurch City. Another Kiwi hopeful Michael Cartwright, formerly of the Football Kingz was also snapped-up by Spirit as they attempt to launch a serious challenge to the NSL title, next season.

The 27-year-old Cervinski scored 13 goals last season for Melbourne Knights to take his NSL tally to 63 from 143 NSL games.

Cervinski brings big match experience to Northern Spirit as he was part of the Melbourne Knights' charge to the playoffs last season as well as playing a role in Carlton's run to the 1997/98 grand final and the 1995/96 NSL premiership with the Melbourne Knights.

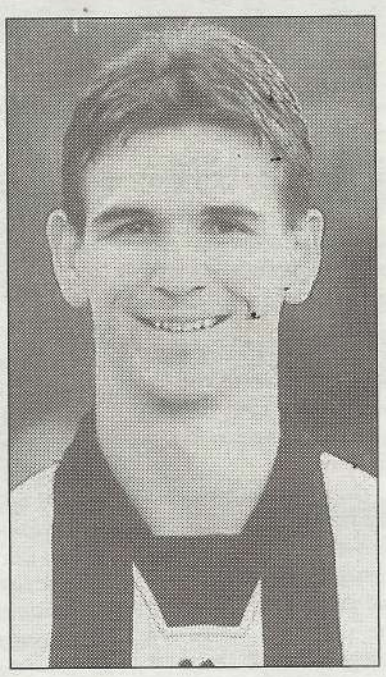
"We are happy to have Adrian come on board," said Northern Spirit Director of Football Bill Collins. "Adrian is a tried-and-rusted striker who has scored goals year in, year out and he will do a good job for us.

"With Pablo Cardozo and Kiwi teenager Brent Fisher already signed, the arrival of Adrian along with Ryan Griffiths and Tony Perinich, gives us a pretty strong forward line." Cervinski and his family are in Sydney this week looking for a house and he will join the rest of the Northern Spirit squad at pre season training from August 20.

Meanwhile, the club has rubbished recent reports that new acquisition, Robbie Trajkovski, who joined the club from Perth Glory a couple of months back, is now in Europe in search of yet another club.

According to Spirit sources, Trajkovski is presently holidaying in Melbourne from where he is expected to journey down to commence pre-season training with Northern Spirit, in a fortnight.

The only confirmed foreign movement from the club is being confirmed to be defender Robbie Enes, who left the country Friday last week, for Norway in a loan deal. The 25year-old will be on loan to an unnamed side till the end of October, with an option of a further extension.



Michael Cartwright: Bound for Northern Spirit.

'Hated' Muscat wanted by Birmingham

Socceroos' defender and vice-captain, Kevin Muscat is once again being described as the "most-hated-man-in-football", despite moves by Birmingham City to sign him on.

Birmingham coach and ex-England international, Trevor Francis admitted last week that he has enquired about the possibility of bringing Muscat to the club, from fellow first division side, Wolverhampton Wanderers.

The Birmingham City boss wants to take the unsettled Kevin Muscat to St Andrew's — a move which is not likely to be welcomed by another Birmingham City player, Martin Grainger.

Grainger labelled the Australian as being "probably the most hated man in football" after his team-mate Martin O'Connor was dismissed in an April 2000 league game, for retaliation after Muscat had dug his nails into O'Connor's neck.

O'Connor, who was also Birmingham's captain later claimed he also sustained injuries to his face and chest.

O'Connor and Muscat were later believed to have been involved in a tunnel fracas when the teams clashed at Wolves ground, last season.

Notwithstanding the unplesant events of last season, Francis confirmed his interest in the Aussie hardman, saying: "There has been contact. I made an inquiry, but Wolves asked me about Andrew Johnson, and that's where it ended."

It is thought that Francis may still be able to tie up a deal with his Midlands rivals, however, and that Wolves would be willing to allow Muscat to leave the club for a fee of around $1.1million.

Rech stays at Brisbane Strikers

Brisbane Strikers' Brasilian soccer import Fernando Rech, has agreed a new two-year deal with the Queensland-based NSL side, after an anxious wait by both management and fans of the club.

Rech, who played in his first NSL season, last year with the Strikers concluded the extension last week after returning to Brisbane from his native Brasil with his family.

The development represents a massive boost to Strikers, who have been battling to keep their key players after being successfully re-instated back to the NSL. Fernando, who joined the Strikers midway through last season has signed a new two year contract with the club.

The retention of the exciting Rech is expected to reassure fans of the club's ambitions which were seriously questioned following the departures key players Jade, Wayne Srhoj and Jeromy Harris. All three players left Strikers for Sydney Olympic.

Rech's desire to stay however, was reporrtedly reinforced by the club's liaison with Italian food manufacturing giants, Parmalat who through their global interests in soccer convinced Rech to remain behind and fight for honours with Brisbane.

The club is meanwhile believed to still be negotiating with more players both overseas and in Australia to ensure the Strikers are competitive this season. Fernando is considered a key signing in rebuilding the squad, as it gets set to commence pre-season build-up.

Olympic's late effort breaks Juventus spirit

By Graham Cooke

A goal six minutes from the end by Ellie Salloum continued Canberra Olympic's dream run in the ACT Premiership as second placed Gungahlin Juventus were beaten 1-0.

This result and losses by Belconnen United and Monaro, virtually decided the composition of the finals with four rounds remaining. It will also be hard to see the so far unbeaten Canberra Deakin releasing their hold on the minor premiership.

Juventus had plenty of opportunities to wrap up the game, Steve Lazzari having a shot deflected away by a defender and then seeing goalkeeper Angelo Konstantinou tip his fierce drive over the bar.

The game appeared to be tilting Juventus' way after Peter Mazis was sent off in the 80th minute; instead it was left to Salloum, who many say is the most under-rated player in the Premiership, to decide the game with a drive past Anthony Giannasca into the roof of the net.

There was drama at Deakin Oval where Canberra Deakin savaged Belconnen United's finals hopes with a 3-1 win.

United's Dennis Langone was taken to hospital with three teeth missing after a clash with Andy Ravanello. After examining him a surgeon said the teeth could be re-attached if they were found.

United officials returned to the ground, and persuaded the match referee to call a break in the game. Deakin goalkeeper Barney Smith found the teeth, which were rushed back to the hospital.

Deakin went ahead when Eugenio Araya scored from the penalty spot. United equalised through Daniel Camara before Marko Perinovic and Tony Lemezina made the game safe for Deakin.

Drama too at O'Connor Oval where Capital City Suns trailed 1-0 and 2-1 against bottom club Tuggeranong United, then built up a 4-2 lead before slipping back to 4-4. Shane Lyons, reshuffled into the forward line after an injury restricted his movements in midfield, gave the Suns a 5-4 lead, then United's Carl Pideski, who was on a hat-trick, missed a penalty five minutes from the end.

Scorers for Suns were Lyons (2), Adam Williams, Dion Cannell (penalty), and Steven Lee. For United, Pideski and Luke Fattore netted two apiece.

In the remaining game Monaro's horror run continued, this time going down to the University of Canberra 2-1. Jimmy Baxter was Monaro's scorer.

ACT PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Canberra Deakin	**12**	**10**	**2**	**0**	**41**	**9**	**32**
Gungahlin Juventus	12	9	0	3	40	11	27
Canberra Olympic	12	7	2	3	33	16	23
Capital City Suns	13	7	2	4	38	27	23
Belconnen United	12	6	0	6	24	21	18
Monaro	12	5	0	7	18	27	15
University of Canberra	11	3	1	7	14	36	10
Weston Creek Royals	12	2	0	10	12	51	6
Tuggeranong United	12	1	1	10	17	39	4

I wouldn't have married Andy if he'd played rugby

By Tim Caimakamis

On a typical Winter's morning after having been given a tour of the house that has been wonderfully restored and extended.

Newcastle defender, Andrew Roberts took great pride in showing *ABSW* his rumpus room complete with two pinball machines plus a pool table.

The room overlooks his half-finished back yard & gardens of which he is building himself. Luckily, little Jack had just fallen asleep and in the tastefully decorated lounge room with the heater raging, *ABSW* began by asking Andrew:

Where were you born?

A.R. "At the Mater Hospital in Waratah (Newcastle) and grew up in a suburb called Elermore Vale. I know when Dad built the house in the late 60's which was surrounded by bush there was still an Air Raid Shelter across the road."

At what age did you start playing football?

A.R. "Four years old. I played all my Junior football with one club (South Wallsend) until the age of sixteen. From that U/16 team, three of us went on to play in the NSL and two with State League Clubs."

Did you play any Junior Rep Football?

A.R. "In 1988 I went to the AIS (that squad included Ned Zelic, Steve Horvat, Shaun Murphy).

From the AIS I made it into the Australian Youth Team but unfortunately a knee injury kept me out of the World Youth Cup qualifiers. I also represented NNSW from U/13's as well as playing a number of senior games for NNSW against various state and overseas teams."

Did you play any other sports?

A.R. "Surf Lifesaving (in 1982 was I the Australian Beach Sprint Champion) as well as Cricket."

As a Junior who/what was your biggest influence?

A.R. "Basically my family. Mum and Dad would take us to Soccer in Winter and to the beach (SLS) in Summer."

When did you make your Senior Debut?

A.R. "At the age of sixteen when I went to play for Newcastle Australs."

What Senior clubs have you played for?

A.R. "Newcastle Austral '86-87, '89-91; AIS '88; Newcastle Breakers '91-'95, '96-'97, '98-00; Canberra Cosmos '97-'98; Newcastle United '00-'01 (all NSL).

"Also I played during the off-season with local clubs Wickham Croatia '93-'94 & Edgeworth Eagles '95."

How many NSL matches have your played?

A.R. "212 scoring four NSL goals."

As a Senior who/what was your biggest influence?

A.R. "Ronnie Smith who was Head Coach when I was at the AIS.

"He, I believe, installed a lot of consistency and determination into my game."

In the past, who has been your favourite Coach?

A.R.(pauses) "I'd have to say Lee Steerey for he not only was a good coach with a down-to-earth style, but was a good bloke as well.

"I played my best Soccer under him and he also gave me the opportunity to play in midfield as well."

What's your view on Summer Soccer?

A.R. "I think it's right for the game with less competition from the other football codes. The summer conditions make it better for the spectators and I don't mind the warmer weather."

Do you prefer day or night games?

A.R. "I'm used to playing night games now with early evenings the best. Friday nights seems to work out the best as that frees up the rest of the weekend."

Do you go to watch local Soccer?

A.R. "Yes and in particular I follow my younger twin brothers now who play for West Wallsend who this year were promoted from the Second Division."

Do you follow the NSL on TV or Newspapers?

A.R. "Yes daily and as much TV as possible. I like to study the performance of our next opponents and especially players that I have been assigned to mark."

Do you watch Football from overseas?

A.R. "Yes (MR rolls his eyes & chuckles) I'm addicted and with my satellite TV I watch as much as I can as often as I can into all hours of the night. (MR confesses that he often acknowledges her requests to come to bed with "I'll come soon, another five minutes" and two hours later if he hasn't fallen asleep on the lounge with a blanket the crackers and dip have kept him awake long enough to crawl back to the bedroom.)

How long have you guys been married?

A.R. "We got married in 1996, but have been going out together since '91.

Marguerite, do you watch Football on TV?

Marguerite "Not really, only the FA Cup final.

Andrew, do you get into trouble for watching too much sport on TV?

(**AR** laughs but **MR** answers) "At least I know where he is, (safe), and I prefer him to stay at home to watch his sport."

Who controls the remote control?

A.R. "It's not an issue; we have two TV's."

(MR) "He does. He has a special resting place for them (remotes).. "Often there would be some sort of sport on both TV's."

MR, do you go to watch Andy play?

"Since 1991, I've been to every home game as well as all the games in Sydney and Wollongong."

MR, is there any routine that Andy follows before matches?

"For every home game, Andy goes to West Leagues Club at 1pm.

"He sits in the same seat and orders spaghetti bolognaise and has lunch with the pensioners, (she giggles), many known on a first name basis."

MR, What is your routine?

"Normally, home games are played on Friday nights. I rush home from work get changed and we go to the game together."

AR, do you have any superstitions before matches?

A.R. "I always put on my left boot first, wear the number three shirt and I'm third in line when we walk out onto the ground."

MR, does Andy have any other superstitions?

"Unless without choice, he will not talk before a match. He always takes the day off before the game and will not answer the phone. "Also I got into trouble for sitting at the wrong table/seat at Wests."

What do you do after a match?

A.R. "Generally we go into the Club and mix with fans and sponsors. "The boys try to get me to party on afterwards, but I've always worked a second job on a Saturday and therefore we just go home and relax."

How do you react when you win?

A.R. "I love winning, as I've always been competitive at whatever I do. "

(MR adds) "He is much more relaxed after a win."

How do you react when you lose?

(**AR** concurs with **MR** before she answers) "Andy doesn't like losing. "After a loss we review the game minute-by-minute. I mainly listen and add a few general comments, (on both him and the team).

"Andy can be very critical and is his own worst enemy."

What is your favourite Number and Colour?

A.R. "Number 3 and Blue."

What music do you prefer?

A.R. "Top 40, but our favourite band is KISS. We actually went to see them last year at the Superdome. It was the loudest noise we've ever experienced and was so loud that we thought that the baby would become tone deaf."

What movies do you prefer?

(AR) "I like action movies."

(MR) "I prefer romantic comedies, although our favourite movie is 'Dances with Wolves' as it was also our first date. I think I've still got the ticket."

MR, does Andy help around the house?

(Both look at each other, then MR answers) "More since the baby was born. Andy is the grounds keeper. He doesn't show much initiative, but I know he is excellent at completing tasks I set.,"- (laughter).

Andy Roberts with wife Marguerite, cuddling little Jack.

Keeping the Faith ... Andy seen here in a Breakers' shirt has remained faithful to Newcastle.

AR, do you cook?

"Cooking is not one of my strengths. Marguerite is an excellent cook."

MR, does he cook?

"He's never cooked. Kitchen instructions are a foreign language and are a cause of temporary deafness,"-(we all laugh).

MR, does Andy have any bad habits?

(The list was growing wild until I qualified my question towards football)

"He always leaves his socks inside out, so that's how they get washed. He only just now has learned to put his training gear in the laundry basket."

How are you both coping with the baby?

(MR) "Jack has his routine of sleeping for 2-3 hours at a time and up to four hours at night with two feeds. He sleeps in our room and I get up at night as usually Andy sleeps through it all.

"As for changing nappies, he would change one out of 100, (not counting the bribes), but I must say he does enjoy bathing Jack. I also think it's made Andy more comfortable around children in general."

MR, will Jack become a sportsman?

"I prefer for him to be studious and become a rocket scientist, but I won't mind if he plays sport. Hopefully he'll choose one that makes him a lot of money like tennis or golf."

(**AR**) then interjects) "What's up with Soccer?"

MR, do you worry about Andy getting injured?

"Basically yes, and last year was bad as I was more emotional because I was pregnant. The worst was in one game when Andy received a cut above his eye that had the blood pouring out.

"I got so upset that everyone thought I was going to run out onto the park. If Andy was a Rugby League player, we wouldn't have gotten married, as I couldn't watch him play and cope with the stress associated with the constant threat of injury."

AR what's your future hold in Soccer?

"I've just signed a two-year contract that will take me to the age of 33. As long as I can keep my fitness level high, (presently in top five within our Club), and remain free of any serious injury, I'd like to play NSW League well into my mid 30's."

AR, What's your greatest Soccer Achievements?

"My proudest moments have been reaching my 100th & 200th NSL appearance milestones. I was also proud to accept last season's Player's Player Award.

"Another highlight has been each of the four NSL goals I scored."

AR, do you have a Goal Celebration?

"Yep, I always kiss the Club emblem on my shirt then run to the sideline, do the aeroplane act, (except for when Marguerite was pregnant), as then I did 'Rock the Cradle')."

Do you have any remaining ambitions?

A.R. "Yes, I want to be part of the 1st Newcastle team to reach the Semi-Finals, as I believe this will be the catalyst for a team to win the Grand Final."

AR, Are you looking forward to the coming season?

"Can't wait for pre-season training, I've been going to the gym three times a week just to assist in maintaining my fitness.

"I'm now an 'oldie', (and the last of the original Breakers), and I want to pass on my experience and passion to the new blokes.

"I also hope to be considered for the captaincy of the team sometime."

ANDY ROBERTS' FACTFILE

Age:	31 (DOB - 28/3/70)
Residence:	Wallsend, Newcastle.
Employment:	(AR) - Full-time Footballer, Part-time Retail Clothes Salesman
(Marguerite Roberts)	Full-time Telstra Employee

Craig Moore: Dark clouds now surround his fitness after picking up a heavy knock over the weekend.

Injury scares for Moore, Vidmar

Severe knocks to Australian pair, Craig Moore and Tony Vidmar looks set to worsen Scottish side, Glasgow Rangers' already-lengthy injury list. Rangers were held to a hard-fought 0-0 draw on Saturday night by Premier League new boys Livingston.

Despite the unexpected outcome, it was the conditions of Moore and Vidmar that gave Rangers' coach, Dick Advocaat more cause for concern at the end of the game. Vidmar looked to have strained a ligament in the 72nd minute after colliding with a Livingston player and required treatment off the pitch before he could continue.

Similarly, Moore, who captained Rangers and helped keep the dangerous visitors at bay, also had to receive treatment off the pitch in the 82nd minute. Actually, he would have been substituted, but the fact that Rangers had used up all their mandatory three changes, forced him to limp back into action and hang in till the end of the game.

Already, Rangers started the Week 2 fixture without the services of five regulars, namely - Barry Ferguson, Lorenzo Amoruso, Arthur Numan, Claudio Reyna and new signing Christian Nerlinger - who were all out with injury problems.

The Aussie pair now face a race against time to be fully-fit for Wednesday's

crucial Champions League qualifier with Turkish club Fenerbahce. The Scottish giants have to beat the Fernebahce in order to book a passage into the lucrative group stages of the Europe's premier club competition.

I detest Soccer Australia politics – Nick Tana

The man that is Nick Tana may in some people's eyes give the perception of being an insensitive, hard-hitting businessman but if you are lucky enough to get up close and personal with the Perth Glory chairman it doesn't take long to understand the rationale behind his actions.

He is a man of values, and more importantly for the Australian soccer supporter, is someone who simply wants the best for our wonderful game. ABSW correspondent RICHARD KREIDER, spoke to the no-nonsense boss last week and as expected; received forthright answers to his equally-forthright questions.

RK: Perth Glory has been in operation for five years now Nick; are you pleased with what has been achieved to date?

Tana: In an overall sense yes, we've achieved exceptional results. However, I believe in the last two years, we've under-achieved albeit for various reasons.

RK: So do you think the highly publicised in-house squabbling, namely within your Board, tarnished the image of the club or it's title chances?

Tana: I'm not too sure if the in-house squabbling can be directly attributed to our chances at the title. I will say, any distraction is exactly that and will have an effect. However, our structure is such that life goes on.

RK: Are you happy with last season's attendances at Perth Oval and will you be remaining with Saturday soccer?

Tana: A recent survey showed Saturday night soccer was the preferred option but we will monitor it very closely this year to determine whether or not we will vary it next season. We budgeted for an average of 14,000 for last season but didn't get it, although this can be attributed to a number of reasons.

RK: What is the current state of play with Leederville Oval?

Tana: At present the matter of the Leederville Oval redevelopment, for the use of Perth Glory is with the council. It is still to be deliberated on by the full council of the Town of Vincent and I am hopeful of a decision by the end of this month

RK: What is your response to Bernd Stange's comment that Leederville Oval is only a short-term development, while the Wellington Street project could have been a better, long-term proposition?

Tana: I have written to Bernd to ask him to clarify this point in writing. Simply because when Leederville was announced, he rang me personally that evening to compliment me on my views and my drive. He said it was the best thing in soccer - push ahead! I have no comment as to why he would say that now, but let me say ultimately, the best solution for Perth Glory is to be in a brand new purpose-built stadium.

RK: Was it a difficult decision not to renew Bernd's contract, if you go by the extraordinary support he received?

Tana: I think in terms of my and Perth Glory's obligation to Bernd and I believe we have fulfilled that obligation. I believe the club under-achieved last season for many reasons but a change was necessary. I think the fact there was a lack of noticeable anti-feeling on this occasion, meant the general public had sympathy toward Bernd in view of the decision that had to be made.

RK: What would you say to those who consider you a brutal negotiator?

Tana: The simple answer there is to look at soccer in general across Australia and tell me how successful it is. In all cases it lies on the whole process of decision-making.

I am not saying Perth Glory is successful as a result of me but what I am saying is with the structure that is in place for Perth Glory; it has allowed it to function outside of the egos, the politics and the private agendas. It hasn't happened simply because there is no need for it. I believe that every decision that I have made is for the good of the game and nothing else. I will swear on a stack of Bibles that I have not, nor any of my directors, received personal benefits as a result of their involvement with Perth Glory.

RK: It's looks inevitable there will be a second Western Australian team in the NSL but when would you prefer to see it eventuate?

Tana: Personally, the issue of inevitability I don't accept. Simply because whilst there are people that have got vested interests and

Nick Tana: I don't fit into a political system. I detest it with a passion and it is not my scene.

personal agendas pushing a second licence, that's all well and good. But I have got faith in the system and even though Tony Labbozzetta stated publicly that he is anxious to see a second licence in Western Australia, the reality is the WA public should not be fooled into believing the reason for this is the betterment of the game when in actual fact it is a clear endorsement that it will weaken the position of Western Australian soccer.

RK: Apart from the support, is there really enough corporate sponsorship in the market to float two NSL clubs from the west, on top of the other sports that participate in a national competition?

Tana: Richard, the best way to answer that, is the (Fremantle) Dockers have not fulfilled their sponsorship; the (West Coast) Eagles I believe have not fulfilled their sponsorship and Perth Glory have definitely not filled theirs. So the question has to be asked, where is all this fantastic support going to come from?

RK: Do you think Perth Glory is hampered by not having a youth team in Soccer Australia's Youth competition?

Tana: I honestly believe we are, to the extent we lack the continuity of young talent coming through and lack the rehabilitation process for our players who have not had match practice. However, having said that, we have had some significant discussions with Soccer West Coast and are confident we will be able to include a youth team in their competition in the year 2002. I find it very unlikely we will ever enter a side in the national competition, simply because the cost of air travel and the overheads associated with the distance would be such that it would be prohibiting.

RK: How is Frank Arok getting along with the club's new youth development academy?

Tana: The two zone competitions kicked off last week and from what I understand the zone development is being well received. There are some areas of resistance where certain academies and other sectors obviously feel intimidated that we might be out there poaching. But as time goes on, they will realise all we are doing is enhancing what they have already got.

RK: Does the club have any intentions of involvement with an overseas club?

Tana: From my point of view, an amalgamation to the extent where they buy into the club will be a position of last resort. I don't have a problem of an alliance with an overseas club for the benefit of exchange of information, technology, systems or players. Besides, I think I have actively promoted a negative involvement policy and as a result of that, people have stayed away from me.

RK: Is it likely you will ever consider taking the Soccer Australia chairmanship?

Tana: Categorically no Richard. I don't fit into a political system. I detest it with a passion and it is not my scene.

RK: Finally, what would you like the soccer public of this country to remember you by in say 20 years time?

Tana: To have been involved in putting a national league team on the map in Western Australia. To have the game commercialised to the extent where it is viable, successful and can stand up against the best of the code and to have had a strong publicly-owned Perth Glory in WA.

Victorian Premier League

FINAL SERIES

Bergers romp into Grand Final

By Bert van Bedaf

Heidelberg United marched into this season's grand final and another date with Port Melbourne after overcoming Bulleen 3-1 in convincing style at its home ground at Village Park last Sunday.

The Bergers had winners in Cameron Brown, George Georgiadis, Damien Vojtek, Eric Vasiliadis, Peter Kakos and Nick Lazarevski, who had an outstanding game.

Bulleen were more in the hunt in the second half and had reason to feel being denied a penalty with the score 2-1. Its better players were Berkan Sakaci, Sava Rusmir and especially Jim Latinopoulos. But the Zebras did not fire during the finals and have paid the price for it.

Both sides created chances and hit the woodwork before the Bergers sealed victory on the stroke of 90 minutes.

Bulleen had the first shot on goal, but Heidelberg claimed the lead after 22 minutes.

Cameron Brown forayed into the Heidelberg defence after 16 minutes and tested 'keeper Jim Kourtis with a vicious shot that this year's Bill Fleming medal winner blocked.

The Bergers struck after some excellent work on the right by Lazarevski.

The former Preston and Thomastown player, who also had a stint in Switzerland, crossed into the box, where Kakos outsmarted his marker Paul Della Rocca and drilled the ball past Michael Theoklitos.

But Bulleen came back quickly. Rusmir, who has been among the Zebras' best all season, crossed the ball towards the far post, where evergreen and Bulleen's lethal weapon Warren Spink headed home to level.

The Zebras could have taken the lead just on 45 minutes, but Kourtis proved his NSL pedigree. Latinopoulos crossed into the area, where Sakaci stood unmarked. But his header went straight into the hands of the reliable Kourtis.

Both sides returned with attacking football after the break. Bulleen came within inches of scoring, but Sakaci had his goal-bound header deflected for a corner in the 52nd minute.

Heidelberg had its opportunities in the 55th and 57th minutes with Lazarevski providing both crosses. But Mile Medjedovic headed wide of the far post and scorer Kakos headed on the right post from an unmarked position.

The Zebras found the net in the 58th minute, but referee Perry Mur disallowed the goal, ruling Sakaci had been offside. Five minutes later, Spink and Latinopoulos were on the spot after Kourtis fumbled a cross, but the lanky 'keeper recovered to clear the ball with his second grab.

The Zebras again were close to scoring in the 70th minute, but this time the crossbar stood in their way. Latinopoulos fired his freekick just inside the area and Nathan Thomas watched his looping header bounce on the bar.

Heidelberg regained the lead with 15 minutes left. Midfielder Damien Vojtek, transferred from St Albans at a bargain price just before the season, released a full-blooded drive from 30 metres that fell into the net after Theoklitis failed to hold on to it.

Shortly after Bulleen players besieged Mur calling for a penalty after the ball appeared to have hit both hands of Vasiliadis inside the area. Mur issued Thomas a yellow card for his cricket-like appealing, but denied Bulleen their chance to draw from the spot.

Exactly on 90 minutes, Lazarevski put an end to the Zebras' run. Peter Di Iorio released the darting forward, who topped his performance with a fine goal that slid underneath Theoklitos and hit the net at the far post.

Sharks, Bergers to meet again in Final

The last time Heidelberg played in a grand final the side lost to Altona Magic in 1996. The last time the Bergers won the title was in 1990.

Port Melbourne has yet to win a Victorian championship.

Coaching a team in the grand final will be a new experience for Port coach Harry Chalkitis. Berger coach Peter Ollerton was in charge of Preston that beat Port seven years ago.

"The important thing is that the teams who finished first and secon are going to play off in the grand final," Chalkitis said.

"We always think that maybe the team that finishes on top should finish the championship, obviously here in Australia we've got finals, which is exciting for the spectators and it gives a bit of interest to the other clubs as well.

Port creamed the Bergers 4-1 last week in the major semi-final and Chalkitis said, "I just hope we didn't waste all our goals in one game."

"The grand final is a totally different game," Chalkitis said. "Both teams will come in with a different atmosphere and a different crowd situation. Knowing that the whole season is at stake, basically, it's going to be the team that settles down better. If both teams can go in with a full set of players it will be a good final and I hope we'll get 4000 to 5000 people there, because I think the game will deserve it.

"Peter Ollerton was coach of Preston, when he won the Victorian title (3-1) against Port Melbourne in 1994. He's had the opportunity of beating Port Melbourne once, so now it's our turn. We've got a full square and barring something happening at training during the week, we should be ok," he said.

Port walked straight into the grand final (after beating Heidelberg) and the question arises whether two breaks of a week each will have disturbed the Sharks' rhythm.

"If I had the choice I'd always take a week's rest, because it gives you the opportunity of recovery, but at the same time against all that you lose your momentum. Playing football week in week out is what it is all about," Chalkitis said.

Both sides are expected to come out and hunt for goals, rather than sit back and defend first.

"You know my philosophy, we'll go and try score goals and hopefully we'll score one more than Heidelberg. If it's 5-4 for Port Melbourne, it will have been one hell of a game and everybody it going to enjoy it," Chalkitis said.

Heidelberg coach Peter Ollerton reflected calmly on Sunday's battle, citing the positives for his side that lost badly to Port a week earlier.

"I still believe last week's game, when we got beaten 4-1, that the score line flattered them. The game at half time was 0-0. We created far better chances than what they created in the first 45 minutes. We didn't punish them and we should have gone at half time maybe one or two goals up," Ollerton said

"We are the type of side when we get up our confidence grows and then we're pretty hard to beat. After saying that, we conceded a bad goal last week and the (players') heads dropped a bit and Port Melbourne punished us.

"Port Melbourne is a free-running type side. We play a free-flowing game as well. We beat them once this year and they beat us twice. So maybe, if we make it 2-2 for the year, we can win the grand final," he said

A 1974 World Cup veteran, former NSL player and last season's coach of the year, Ollerton will tell his players to relax and enjoy the game.

"I'm not putting any pressure on the players. I just want to them to enjoy it. It will be a good experience for them. For some of the younger boys it will be a new experience. They'll go out and try and win it. If that works out, great. If not, well, good luck to Port Melbourne," he said.

Bulleen cries foul over handball

With the score 2-1 in favor of Heidelberg, the ball appeared to hit Eric Vasiliadis on both hands and Bulleen immediately appealed for a penalty.

But referee Perry Mur indicated play on much to the dismay of the Bulleen players and coach Joe Mullen.

"the referee picked up a legitimate goal that we scored (rules offside). Then minutes from the end the player controlled the ball with both hands and he hasn't seen that one," Mullen said.

"It's a shameful performance by the linesman and the referee on both decisions. I think he knows and his linesman knows as well. Nobody says we would have scored from a penalty anyway, but it was an opportunity that we should have had," he said.

Commenting on the play, Mullen said, "I thought Heidelberg's first 20 minutes were good. They were on top until they scored. But after that there was only one team in it. We created many chances and at the end of the day we're not there and they're there to have another chance against Port Melbourne.

"We had an honest performance by our squad. We wanted to be involved in the grand final. That was our ultimate objective. We haven't achieved that.

But we've just got to live with that," he said.

Of the handball controversy, Berger coach Peter Ollerton said, "I saw the ball bounce off (Vasiliadis). The referee was probably in a better position than I was. I was 60 metres away from the situation. I don't think there was anything to worry about.

"We had our shout for handball in the first half and he (referee) didn't give it to us. We had, what I thought, was a penalty last week against Lazarevski in the first 10 minutes against Port Melbourne and we didn't get it.

"I don't think Bulleen has got anything to moan about. Over a period of 12 months you're going to get some type of decisions. Sometimes the referee is going to give them and sometimes he's not. So, you can't really say, you lost the game through that," he said.

About the play, Ollerton said, "It's not a like an ordinary league game.

It's like an FA Cup finals game. There has to be a winner. Both coaches took a few chances. I pushed (Damian) Vojtek forward in the last 25 minutes, because I thought Bulleen was getting on top of us, and it paid off. He picked the ball up from 25 metres, it swerved a bit and the 'keeper misjudged it. But it's the great old saying, if you try and it's on target, you always have a chance to score. And it came off for us today.

"Just prior to that we created two fantastic chances. Mile (Medjedovic) missed a point-blank header and (Peter) Kakos headed it against the post. A fairly simple chance, I thought, it was," he said.

Port Melbourne coach Harry Chalkitis was at Olympic Village to assess Sydney's opponent. He believed Bulleen should have been awarded a penalty.

"Bulleen may be justified in saying they missed out on a penalty. I thought it was a penalty from where I was standing. It hit both his (Vasiliadis) hands and at the end of the day Bulleen can feel a bit uncomfortable about that. But that's football. You just got to accept it," Chalkitis said.

About the game, Chalkitis said, "It could have gone both ways this afternoon. There were chances at both ends and both goal keepers pulled off saves. Both sets of front runners missed a couple of good opportunities.

"Heidelberg's second goal was an unfortunate mistake by the keeper. The ball bounced just in front of him, which is a nightmare for a goal keeper.

People are going to look at it and think it was very soft. Unfortunately, the boy's going to live with that now, but I'm sure he'll learn from it," he said.

VIC PREMIER LEAGUE PRELIMINARY FINAL

SUNDAY 5 AUGUST

Heidelberg **3**
22 Kakos, 75 Vojtek, 90 Lazarevski.

Bulleen **1**
28 Spink

Venue: Olympic Village. **Referee:** Perry Mur. **Crowd:** 1,100

HEIDELBERG: *Kourtis, Schwal, Lazarevski, Zarogiannis, Medjedovic, Brown, Georgiadis, Vojtek, Iorio, Vasiliadis, Kakos.*

BULLEEN: *Theoklitis, Tartaglia, Thomas, Della Rocca, Latinopoulos, Sakaci (Plunkett), Spink, Hastie, Rusmir, Gugliemi (MacNicol), Gnjidic.*

Victorian Premier League

GRAND FINAL

SUNDAY 12 AUGUST

Port Melbourne v Heidelberg

Bob Jane Stadium, South Melbourne, 3pm.

BROADCAST

* Bill Brickell and his team will broadcast the grand final live on Southern FM (88.3) and Northern FM (98.9) from 3pm onwards.

GRAND FINAL BRUNCH, AUGUST 12

Grand Waldorf Ballroom
Carlton Crest Hotel
65 Queens Rd, Melbourne
10am - 12.30pm
Tickets at **$65** each.
For bookings contact **5221 0709.**

For more information, log onto
www.soccervictoria.org.au

QUEENSLAND SOCCER FEDERATION

"Perry Park" Abbotsford Road, Mayne. Brisbane. 4006.
Phone: (07) 3252 5327 ● Fax: (07) 3252 1137 ● www.qldsoccer.com.au

PREMIER LEAGUE WRAP-UPS By Glenn Davis

The Queensland premier league championship and relegation battle is set for a thrilling climax with leaders Wynnum and Brisbane City facing off for the title while Pine Rivers produced an Houdini act to ease away from the bottom after an intriguing rounds of results last weekend.

With just two rounds remaining Wynnum remained three points clear of Brisbane City who must win a crucial catch up match against Bundaberg to draw level on points at the top of the table.

Wynnum have a slightly better goal difference than Brisbane City but face testing assignments in their final two appearances away to the Gold Coast and Ipswich Knights at home in the remaining matches while City have the easier run home.

Brisbane City coach Danny Wright was delighted with his side's spirited fightback coming from behind to snatch a 2-1 win over Taringa Rovers while Wynnum picked up its three points in a thrilling 4-3 win over Toowoomba.

In the relegation battle Mt. Gravatt slipped into the relegation zone going down 2-0 to Easts while Pine Rivers' second round revival continued when Luke Ballard scored the only goal in a 1-0 win over Bundaberg to lift them into third last place.

Scott Rocker: Notched a hat-trick for Wynnum.

In other games goals from Cameron Hunt and Danny Flaskas gave Rochedale Rovers a 2-0 win over Brisbane Lions while Matt Hilli scored the only goal in Ipswich Knights 1-0 victory over the Gold Coast.

Wright saw a lot of positives come out of Brisbane City's victory over Taringa and is looking forward to next weekend's Queensland Cup final against Brisbane Lions while Wynnum and the remaining sides have a week off.

Brisbane City trailed after only 15 minutes when Steve Dawes headed home at the far post for Taringa but they fought back to level on the half hour when South American striker John Sar-Martin buried a shot after cutting in down the right flank.

City's winner came within five minutes when reliable midfielder Andy King finished off a cross at the near post which beat Taringa's keeper Clint Del Santo.

Wright's decision to promote reserve grader Sar-Martin proved a masterstroke and may have resolved Brisbane City's recent goal scoring woes.

"It was a disappointing scoreline again but we played well and could have won by a far greater margin except for Del Santo," Wright said.

"Taringa scored first against the run of play but we dominated and finished the stronger.

"I'm fairly positive about the way we've been playing lately and we'll start to taper down now with the finals around the corner.

"We've raised the intensity level at training recently and I want us to peak for the Queensland Cup against Brisbane Lions next week."

Wright believes the Queensland Cup match will prove an advantage for Brisbane City in their title chase with Wynnum.

"I don't like having a week off and I'd rather play next weekend than have a break like Wynnum," he said.

"If we finish in the top two we get two bites at the grand final and will get a weekend off but I'll be asking for a trial against the Brisbane Strikers rather than loose any momentum by not playing."

Wynnum coach Peter Tokesi was never overly concerned despite the Wolves close result over Toowoomba.

Toowoomba took a shock 2-0 lead into the halftime break before Wynnum piled on four second half goals to maintain their slender lead at the top of the premiership table.

Adam Nicholson and Martin James put Toowoomba in front early before Wynnum replied with a treble from Scott Rocker and and another from Josh Rose.

Rose started the Wynnum fightback scoring three minutes after the break before Rocker pounced to grab the equaliser when Toowoomba keeper Trevor Gilliland parried a Brendan Rodgers shot seven minutes later.

Rocker picked up his second to put Wynnum ahead 3-2 for the first time in the game after he beat two defenders before driving past Gilliland from 18 metres.

A set piece ten minutes from time gave Rocker his hatttrick while Toowoomba scored in the dying minutes through Raja Aysen.

"When we were down at halftime I always felt we could score two goals and in the end it could have been five or six," Tokesi said.

"We're still ahead of Brisbane City but conceding three goals might hurt us later on.

"Overall I thought we had the better of play against Toowoomba but we didn't dominate in the first half enough and had two costly defensive lapses.

"Toowoomba defended well and we were too direct in the first half so I told them at the break that we had to go around them which we did effectively in the second half."

Tokesi made special mention of midfielder Brad Ditton for leading the way for Wynnum's fightback.

Brad Ditton: "Had a very good second half."

"Our first half was poor and they were first to the ball all the time," he said.

"Dits had a very good second half and led the way which made all the difference after the break."

Meanwhile Pine Rivers coach Steve Dolan was elated to see his side leapfrog Mt. Gravatt and Bundaberg to ease their relegation fears.

"Bundaberg still have a game in hand but its against Brisbane City," Dolan said.We've been gradually improving in the second round. We picked up only five points in the first round and now we've got ten points already in the second round."

Dolan believes his young side can now see some light at the end of the relegation tunnel.

"Hopefully we can avoid relegation from here now that we've jumped Bundaberg and Mt. Gravatt," he said.

QUEENSLAND PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES (ROUND 21)

Saturday 18th August

Mt Gravatt v IPSW Knights	6.00pm
Gold Coast v Wynnum	7.00pm
TBA Raiders v Pine Rivers	7.00pm

Sunday 19th August

B'Berg Waves v Rochedale Rovers	2.45pm
Brisbane Lions v Taringa Rovers	4.00pm
Brisbane City v Eastern Suburbs	2.45pm

ALL THE RESULTS

Taringa Rovers	1	Brisbane City	2
Rochedale Rovers	2	Brisbane Lions	0
Wynnum	4	T'wmba Raiders	3
IPSW Knights	1	Gold Coast City	0
Eastern Suburbs	2	Mt Gravatt	0

Pine Rivers Utd bye

LEADING GOALSCORERS

1. Adem Poric	Gold Coast	14
2. Scott Rocker	Wynnum	13
3. Anthony Roche	Wynnum	12
4. Matty Hilli	Ipswich Knights	11
5. Joshua Rose	Wynnum	11
6. Allen Cameron	Brisbane City	10
7. Reece Tollenaere	Brisbane Lions	10
8. Andrew King	Brisbane City	9
9. Des Hughes	Brisbane Lions	9
10. Shane Coffey	Easts	8

DIVISION 1 XXXX LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wynnum	20	13	6	1	54	21	45
Brisbane City	19	12	6	1	41	15	42
Gold Coast City	20	10	6	4	38	22	36
Brisbane Lions	20	9	7	4	41	28	34
IPSW Knights	20	9	7	4	33	20	34
Rochedale Rovers	20	10	4	6	36	27	34
Taringa Rovers	20	7	4	9	24	29	25
Eastern Suburbs	20	5	4	11	29	50	19
T'wmba Raiders	20	4	5	11	23	37	17
Pine Rivers Utd	20	4	3	13	25	54	15
Mt Gravatt	20	4	2	14	26	55	14
Bundaberg Waves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

NSW Youth League Results

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE:

GRADE 13: Fairfield Bulls 2 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2, Canterbury Marrickville 2 Parramatta Eagles 2, Blacktown City 5 Central Coast Coasties 0, Marconi Stallions 2 Newcastle United 3, Bankstown City Cubs 0 Penrith Panthers 0, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0 Wollongong Wolves 1, Sutherland Shire 0 Manly Warringah 1 St George 1 Sydney Olympic 0.

GRADE 14: Fairfield Bulls 0 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 3, Canterbury Marrickville 0 Parramatta Eagles 3, Blacktown City 4 Central Coast Coasties 0, Marconi Stallions 1 Newcastle United 1, Bankstown City Cubs 1 Penrith Panthers 0, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0 Wollongong Wolves 1, Sutherland Shire 1 Manly Warringah 0, St George 0 Sydney Olympic 6.

GRADE 15: Fairfield Bulls 1 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 4, Canterbury Marrickville 0Parramatta Eagles 4, Blacktown City 0 Central Coast Coasties 1, Marconi Stallions 2 Newcastle United 1, Bankstown City Cubs 2 Penrith Panthers 1, St George 0 Sydney Olympic 3.

GRADE 17: Parramatta Eagles 2 Sydney United 2, Fairfield Bulls 1 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 3, Canterbury Marrickville 0 Parramatta Eagles 2, Blacktown City 4 Central Coast Coasties 2, Marconi Stallions 1 Newcastle United 0, Bankstown City Cubs 2 Penrith Panthers 0, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0 Wollongong Wolves 5, Sutherland Shire 0 Manly Warringah 2, St George 0 Sydney Olympic 4, Wanderers 2 W' gong Wolves 5.

GRADE 18: Fairfield Bulls 3 Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Bankstown City Lions 2 Fraser Park Jets 0, Dulwich Hill 3 Stanmore Hawks 0 (Win by Forfeit), Rockdale City Suns 1 Hajduk Wanderers 2, Macarthur Rams 3 AC United 1, MSC Liverpool 2 Manly Warringah Dolphins 1.

SUPER CADET LEAGUE:

GRADE 11: Manly Warringah Dolphins 1 Wollongong Wolves 0, Blacktown City 7 Central Coast Coasties 1, St George 0 Sydney Olympic 0, Bankstown City Cubs 1 Penrith Panthers 2, Sutherland Shire 1 Manly Warringah Dolphins 2.

GRADE 12: Manly Warringah Dolphins 1 Wollongong Wolves 0, Blacktown City 1 Central Coast Coasties 2, St George 0 Sydney Olympic 0, Bankstown City Cubs 0 Penrith Panthers 2, Sutherland Shire 1 Manly Warringah Dolphins 0.

Fairfield Bulls 5 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1, Canterbury Marrickville 0 Parramatta Eagles 2, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1 Wollongong Wolves 3, Fairfield Bulls 2 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2, Canterbury Marrickville 2 Parramatta Eagles 1, Eastern Suburbs.

WOLLONGONG NEWS

Otto Bader

Wolves Latest News - Development Officer Eddie Teroso reports that he had over 40 youngsters last week on trials for the Wolves Youth Grade despite the cut-off date of 1/7/82. Training is at Brandon Park every Monday and Wednesday 6 pm. Young talents from all over Australia have shown interest in joining the Wolves. Unbelievable as it is but boys from Hobart, Tasmania, from far away as Queensland enquired as well as from all over NSW. It is a recognition of the clubs achievements and standing in soccer circles. The coach has to cut the squad next week down to around 19 players, the numbers to carry into the new soccer season. The available talent is very encouraging.

Eddie Tesoro is also holding special training sessions every Tuesday for players from age groups U/11s to U/15s, selected from the present Wolves junior teams and intends this going all year round to develop the best players even further in their aim to reach the highest possible standard.

Preparations for an Academy of soccer is still in the planning stage. The Wolves are in demand with local junior clubs having contacted the office to seek visits from the Development Officer plus senior players to attend their training sessions, Junior clubs like Kiama, Woonona and Albion Park have been contacted. The Wolves are pleased with the interest of the local junior clubs in the offer to assist in coaching the kids.

Senior Training - according to General Manager the Wolves start official training on Sunday 5/8/01 under coach Ron Corry and Stuart Beedie. The club has settled the squad and is looking forward with confidence to do well in the coming soccer season.

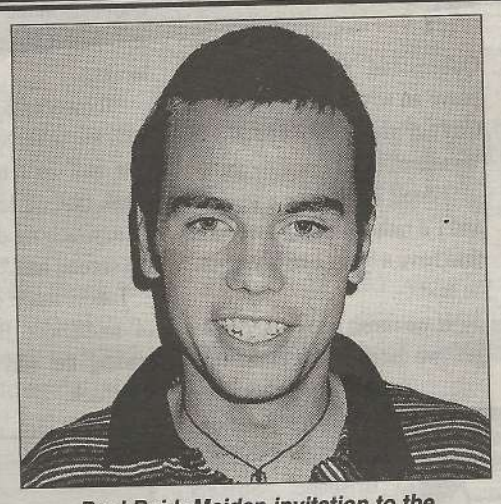
Wolves For Socceroos - Two Wolves players have been called up into the National squad of coach Frank Farina to prepare for friendly games against Japan and Solomon Islands later this month. Former Wolves players Sasho Petrovski and Paul Reid received the call-up for the

National team for the first time and are thrilled. Both had outstanding seasons with the club. Former Wolves players Scott Chipperfield, Steve Laybutt and Mark Robertson have also been called up into the Australian squad.

ICU Premier League - Round 17 saw most games postponed due to wet weather. Only two games were played with the cancelled ones due to be played as double-header last Sunday.

Coniston Lions won 3:0 over Shoalhaven City - A game vital for them to keep in touch with the top teams while Shoalhaven City is still firmly anchored in the bottom half of the table. Coniston is now on 34 points in 3rd position and face now the competition leaders Kemblawarra on Saturday, a crucial encounter for both, neither team can afford to lose points to stay up front.

Port Kembla took the points with a 1:0 win over Cringila, in a game which could have gone either way. The golden goals scored by new Port striker Ned Aleksic, who is making quiet an impact in local soccer and could be of interest to the Wollongong Wolves coach. Cringila only have themselves to blame for missing several good opportunities. They lost a player being send off in the first half but still had enough play to do



Paul Reid: Maiden invitation to the Socceroos.

better. Port is now on 39 points, one ahead of the competition leader Kemblawarra who have a game in hand and must win to maintain their lead. Port faces now Wollongong Olympic and cannot afford to take them easy even though Olympic is in the middle of the table.

The prospect of the teams competing for the title are still there for the taking considering that four teams up front can collect enough points to steal the championship. Kemblawarra is obviously looking good with a narrow lead over Port and playing well, Port has their eyes on another championship and their talented squad is capable of toppling the competition leaders. Coniston is close behind and cause embarrassment for any of the leading side, they have from the top teams Kemblawarra to play, a dangerous match for both.Western Suburbs is in fourth spot , facing still Coniston and Port from the top teams and must show form to topple any of them, hoping to win the other games against lower placed teams.

Cringila, Wollongong Olympic and Balgownie all have an outside chance to make the play-off rounds providing they can lift their form.

Lysaght, Picton and Bulli will be looking to consolidate their positions, surely good enough to do that without to many hick-ups. All still have to play strong opposition, hoping to pick up enough points to stay clear of relegation.

The reaming teams Shoalhaven city and Northern United are in deep trouble and most-likely will drop into the lower division. North is one of the foundation clubs of Illawarra Soccer and is rebuilding with a very young, inexperienced squad. Shoalhaven City, based in Nowra, provides an interest for local youngster to aim for a higher competition and will miss playing in Premier League unless they dramatically lift their form and pick up more points to escape.

ICU First Division - only three games were played due to the wet conditions, all others are re-scheduled for a double header on the weekend. South Coast United won 4:0 against Dapto, a rather convincing result, going well over the last rounds winning with good solid results, still in with a chance to make the play-offs. Since veteran coach David Skeen - a former national league player - put on his boots again for a last hurrah due to shortage of first graders, the team has not lost a game and they will most probably convince him to continue for the last matches.

Warilla Wanderers lost the top of the table clash at home against Tarrawanna by the odd goal 0:1. Both now on equal points. Actually with a late decision by Soccer NSW, Warilla have now a game in hand to play against Kiama and need to win to keep up with Tarrawanna who lead at present, Kiama is second with a game in hand and Warilla third. All this can change with the games to be played in the last rounds, either of them dropping a point or all three is out of the running. One could not have ask for a more exciting finish.

Warilla had chances against Tarrawanna, both teams played well in a clean encounter, no cards issued, a match full of action. Tarrawanna scored the winning goals in the final 10 minutes when veteran Claude Cellini dribbled through the defence and slotted the ball into the net. The game was eagerly contested by both sides, well balanced, on the day as the more-stable Tarrawanna side took the points.

The third game saw Albion Park WE defeating Shellharbour City 3:0 with a hat-trick by the experienced striker Ian Morris, taking his chances well with quiet some skill, outsmarting the young defenders. Albion Park WE are still within reach of the top teams and certainly will have a word to say in the play-offs. For the young Shellharbour City side only pride was at stake and the boys credited themselves with a good effort, the score at the break was only 1:0 and they even had a chance to score, there young keeper done well until he was beaten by well placed shots, one dropped ball cost a goal, the others unstoppable. In Reserve Grade, Albion Park won 2:1 and in Youth Grade Shellharbour City won 2:1, saving something for the day.

The weekend will not bring any drastic changes to the top teams unless Kiama drops a point against Woonona or Tarrawanna loses against Helensburgh while Warilla travels to Highlands and have to be cautious not to take things too easy.

Shellharbour City is calling all its troops together for the all-important AGM on Monday 27th August at the Workers Club, intending to submit a five-year plan to restructure the soccer club with plans do to better after this years poor season. Members are required to join in and form new committee. The annual Players Presentation is planned for Saturday 18th August at the Workers Club, cost $25.- per person.

Soccer Illawarra General Meeting – The association is calling all 29 member clubs delegates together for the quarterly club meeting. This year it is of out most importance since as one of the items on the agenda a restructure of next years competition is noticed. The present First Division competition with 17 teams has not been successful and the clubs have to look at other alternatives. Obviously it depends on the number of clubs nominating for membership to the Illawarra Soccer Association next year, instead of the present 29 member clubs there could be more or less and thus the formation of two or three divisions could eventuate.

Sasho Petrovski: Likely to make his international debut against Japan.

Quiet some discussions have been created in the media and among the clubs with a suggestion tabled and that can only be a good sign with interest high, everybody looking for improvement and better competitions.

Juniors Soccer - Over the previous weekend, all junior games have been cancelled due to the wet weather. More than 100 games are scheduled this weekend in boys and girls competition. Round 14 is coming up and the last month of regular competition with leading teams looking for the play-offs and possible games in the NSW Champion of Champions round which could take the local sides to anywhere in NSW country areas or in Sydney against well known clubs.

Bert Bampton @ Youth Cup Draw - On Wednesday the 8th August the quarter finals are scheduled at Balls Paddock Youth Grade Dapto v Bulli and First Grade Northern United v Helensburgh.

At Crehan Park Youth Cup Balgownie v Lysaght and Bampton Cup Cringila v Lysaght.

At Brandon Park Youth Tarrawanna v Shellharbour City and first Grade Wollongong Olympic v Port Kembla.

At Terry Reserves in Youth Grade Western Suburbs v Kemblawarra and in First Grade Albion Park WE v Kemblawarra.

**Yours Truly Will Be overseas until September starting from this week.*

Winter Super League

VALENTINE SPORTS PARK

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ROUND 21

TOP 5 CONSOLIDATE FINALS BERTH

Bankstown City 1 Fraser Park 0

Bankstown City consolidated top spot on the competition table with an uninspiring 1-0 win over Fraser Park Jets at Jensen Park on Sunday afternoon.

The deal-breaker came courtesy of an air-born Richard Luksic in the 72nd minute who threw his entire weight behind a brilliant header.

An evenly matched encounter played under the unforgiving rays of the sun, it played like a broken record with the ball travelling from goal to goal in a luckless contest which frustrated the fans no end.

MSC Liverpool 0 Manly-Warringah 3

Manly-Warringah cemented a play-off berth with a 3-0 win over MSC Liverpool at Hammondville Oval last Sunday. Despite some early threats by the spirited Liverpool side, it was a Mark Beldham goal in the 34th minute, which provided the visitors with a 1-0 half time lead. Soon after the break, they extended their advantage.

Firstly Adam Snyder capitalised on a Danny Townsend pass, then three minutes later, Steve Berry took his season total to 12 goals when he converted a free kick from the edge of the penalty box to set up the 3-0 win in a sometimes spiteful encounter.

Macarthur Rams 0 AC United 2

A cameo performance from veteran striker Alex Araujo with two goals was enough to give AC United a comfortable 2-0 victory over Macarthur Rams.

Played in something akin to a gale, Araujo scored two goals, one in either half to take his season tally to 11. His first came after some good lead-up work from Allan Picken while the second came when he capitalised on a Rams defensive error.

The match finished with ten men on each side after Richard Harrison and Devrim Huseyin were both treated to an early shower from referee Ben Williams after an altercation in the 14th minute turned sour.

Rockdale City 3 Hajduk Wanderers 0

The Rockdale City Suns were able to secure the win that guarantees their spot in the finals in front of their passionate home fans against a gallant Hajduk Wanderers team.

The 3-0 result came despite the absence of Richard Plesa, who is overseas trailing, and courtesy of goals from midfielders Leo Carle, Kresimir Marusic and substitute Bill Petrovski.

Leo Carle scored the first goal just before half time with a lethal shot from the edge of the penalty area. Kresimir Marusic scored his 2nd goal in 2 matches when he showed his class by finishing from an acute angle.

Bill Petrovski scored the 3rd in the last minute of play when he ran onto a Francis Awaritefe pass before beating the defence and rounding the keeper.

The Suns have extended their undefeated run to 6 games and have conceded only 1 goal in that time.

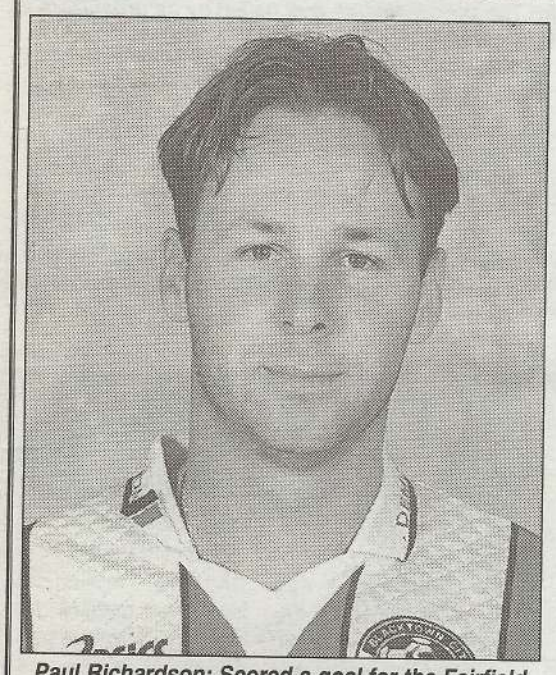
Dulwich Hill 0 Stanmore Hawks 0

Dulwich Hill has guaranteed themselves a place in the finals series with a hard fought nil all draw over the Stanmore Hawks.

The determined Hawks held off third placed Dulwich Hill who came at them with all guns blazing throughout the second half but could not find a goal. A turning point in the game came in the 78th minute when an ugly challenge by a Hawks defender in the goal box could easily have produced a penalty, but referee Alex Spirovski, who was on the spot for his decision, denied the plea.

In the last 10 minutes of play, Stanmore eventually sparked a last minute attack and generated three successive corner kicks, threatening Dulwich Hill with a shock loss. But, despite all efforts to produce a goal, the match remained a nail-biting 0-0 draw.

BULLS CHARGE ON



Paul Richardson: Scored a goal for the Fairfield Bulls who continue their charge to the Winter Super League finals.

Fairfield Bulls 6
Hurstville City 0

The Fairfield Bulls avenged last Wednesday night's 3-0 loss to Dulwich Hill with a demoralising six nil victory over the hapless Hurstville City Minotaurs at Nineveh Field on Saturday night.

Leading marksman Mathew Borg opened the scoring for the hosts on 25 minutes after chasing down a through ball from Marc Hoenselaars to slot the ball past the rushing Stacy Alogdellis.

His strike partner in Marc Hoenselaars doubled their advantage from the penalty spot moments before half time after Marcus Pavlakis had handled in the area.

After the half time interval, both Hoenselaars and Borg collected a second, the former pouncing on a rebound on 52 minutes after a Craig Sharpley shot had been partially blocked and Borg fired through the legs of Alogdellis after a Javier Mancino cross found its way to him. Paul Richardson and Johnny Ghisso collected goals on the 57th and the 86th minute to round off a dominant all round attacking blitz.

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE LADDER

(AFTER ROUND 21)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. **Bankstown City Lions**	**20**	**13**	**4**	**3**	**36**	**13**	**43**
2. Fairfield Bulls	20	12	4	4	65	25	40
3. Dulwich Hill	21	12	4	5	38	20	40
4. Rockdale City Suns	21	12	3	6	41	32	39
5. Manly Warringah Dolphins	20	12	2	6	47	25	38
6. AC United	21	10	4	7	30	25	34
7. Hurstville City Minotaurs	20	7	4	9	19	34	25
8. Macarthur Rams	20	6	4	10	28	28	22
9. Stanmore Hawks	20	6	3	11	22	38	21
10. Hajduk Wanderers	21	5	4	12	28	47	19
11. Fraser Park	20	5	3	12	30	39	18
12. MSC Liverpool	20	1	3	16	18	76	6

For further information see:
www.soccernsw.com.au

Winter Super League

ROUND 22

FRIDAY 12th AUGUST

MSC Liverpool v Bankstown City Lions — Hammondville Oval
First Grade: 3.00pm *U/21: 1.00pm* *U/18: 11.00am*

Fraser Park Jets v Fairfield Bulls — Fraser Park
First Grade: 3.00pm *U/21: 1.00pm* *U/18: 11.00am*

Hurstville City v Dulwich Hill — St George Stadium
First Grade: 3.00pm *U/21: 1.00pm* *U/18: 11.00am*

Stanmore Hawks v Rockdale City Suns — Arlington Oval
First Grade: 3.00pm *U/21: 1.00pm* *U/18: 11.00am*

Hajduk Wanderers v Macarthur Rams — Hajduk Stadium
First Grade: 3.00pm *U/21: 1.00pm* *U/18: 11.00am*

AC United v Manly Warringah Dolphins — Abruzzi Oval
First Grade: 3.00pm *U/21: 1.00pm* *U/18: 11.00am*

RESCHEDULED MATCHES FROM RD 20

TUESDAY 7th AUGUST

Stanmore Hawks v Fairfield Bulls — Nineveh Field
First Grade: 7.00pm

WEDNESDAY 8th AUGUST

Stanmore Hawks v Fairfield Bulls — Nineveh Field
U/21: 8.15pm *U/18: 6.30pm*

Manly Warringah Dolphins v Macarthur Rams — Cromer Park
U21: 7.30pm

Fraser Park v MSC Liverpool — Fraser Park
First Grade: 8.15pm *U/21: 6.30pm*

THURSDAY 9th AUGUST

Manly Warringah v Macarthur Rams — Cromer Park
U/21: 7.30pm

FRIDAY 10th AUGUST

Stanmore Hawks v Fairfield Bulls — Nineveh Field
First Grade: 7.30pm

Catch up with all the latest news on the Winter Super League and other NSW Soccer news on our website:

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Cairo goes wild as Madrid lose 'Match of Century'

Al Ahly of Egypt ousted Spanish champions Real Madrid 1-0 in a prestige friendly on Saturday as the Spanish side wilted in the severe heat.

A flag-waving crowd of 70,000 saw the African 'Club of the Century' score an impressive win once they had weathered an early storm as Roberto Carlos and Frenchman Claude Makelele both went close for Real at the start of the match.

Real Madrid, who tripped to Egypt with a star-studded squad featuring the world's highest signing Zineddine Zidane, Portuguese playmaker Luis Figo, Spain international forward Raul Gonzalez and Brazilian defender Roberto Carols, played in front of a packed 70,000 stadium, the game highlighting Al-Ahly's nomination by CAF as Africa's team of the century.

Al Ahly came out for the second half determined to push back Real, who included the world's most expensive player, Frenchman Zinedine Zidane, in their ranks back as the thermometer climbed towards 36 degrees Celsiùs.

In what appeared to be a splendid start of Portuguese new manager Jose Da Silva, Al-Ahly showed organization and cohesion in the first half, keeper Issam El-Hadhari was inspiring in the hosts' goal, denying Zideddine Zidane and Roberto Carlos two clear-cut chances in the opening 15 minutes, while the Reds' forwards barely had an opportunity in the opposite goalmouth, as visitors Real reigned supreme.

And Nigerian substitute Sunday, on as a substitute for Ahmed Abou Mouslim, bagged the winner ten minutes after the break following a through ball from Hossam Ghaly.

Instead of Real reacting the hosts almost scored again as Alaa Ibrahim hit the post and Khaled Bibo twice fired just off target.

Real's England international winger Steve McManaman, who replaced Luis Figo on the hour, did come close to levelling late on but keeper Essam Al Hadary made a fine save from a piledriver.

Fans greeted Al Ahly's win with a concert of klaxons and many fans tore into the streets and joyously waved their shirts in the air.

"It wasn't Real's day. It was Al Ahly's day and they beat a team containing the most expensive players in the world," said the president of the Egyptian Football Federation, General Al Dahchoury Harb.

Real Madrid's and the world's most expensive player Zinedine Zidane, vies with Egypt's Al-Ahly player, Hossam Ghali (left) during their friendly match in Cairo.The friendly match was hailed by its organizers as "the match of the century."

Real Madrid's soccer players from left to right, Luis Figo, Fernando Morientes and Raul Gonzales, pose in front of the 5,000-year-old Giza pyramids before their weekend game against Egyptian side, Al-Ahly.

Brazil snubs Barca over Rivaldo

The Brazilian Soccer Confederation (CBF) denied a request from Spain's Barcelona club to release Rivaldo from his obligation to play for the national team in an August 15 World Cup qualifier against Paraguay.

According to a news item appearing on the Internet Web site "pele.net," Brazilian national team coordinator Antonio Lopes told the Spanish club that the star midfielder must report to the squad on August 7, as coach Luiz Felipe Scolari wants him in the lineup for a friendly match with Panama next week.

Lopes also said Brazil is not prepared to release any other player summoned for duty with the national team, adding that the CBF will seek sanctions against clubs failing to let competitors return to Brazil in time to prepare for the Aug. 15 match with Paraguay.

The Web site said that CBF officials expect German clubs Bayern Munich, Hertha Berlin and Bayer Leverkussen to formally request the release of Elber, Marcelinho Paraiba and Lucio, respectively.

In fact, though Scolari has already included Elber and Lucio in the lineup for the friendly with Panama, the German clubs have said they intend to release the players only for the qualifier against Paraguay.

GREEK JOB FOR VENABLES?

Former England manager Terry Venables was named by the Greek FA (EPO) over the weekend as one of five candidates to take over as national Greek coach.

A final decision will be announced by the EPO on August 6.

Venables has been shortlisted for the post along with former Inter Milan coach Marco Tardelli, former Spain manager Javier Clemente, veteran German Otto Rehhagel and Italian Nevio Scala, the EPO announced in a statement.

Two months ago, however, Venables ended all links with English premier league club Middlesbrough after helping them to avoid relegation. Venables, 58, has since resumed his career as a television pundit.

He was appointed coach of Australia in 1996 but failed to take them to the 1998 World Cup. Greece, who are out of contention for next year's World Cup finals, have been without a coach since Vassilis Daniil was forced to resign in July.

"A five-man committee will make the decision, based on international success, organisational approach and financial requirements of each of the candidates," the EPO said.

Juve move for Honduran star

Italian giants Juventus are about to sign Honduran international striker David Suazo from second division Italian side Cagliari, media reports said on Saturday.

The Honduran press quoted Italian daily Nuova Serdegna as saying the 21-year-old Suazo was on his way to Turin, while one paper, El Heraldo, carried the banner headline: "Suazo to Juventus for 24 million dollars."

Other reports mentioned a fee of 15 million dollars. La Tribuna said Lazio and AC Milan were also after the player, who missed his country's run to claim third place at last month's Copa America.

Suazo made his name back in Honduras with Olimpia before joining Cagliari for 3.2 million dollars a year ago. He had a successful year in the Serie B, holding down a regular place and scoring 12 league goals.

Honduran international winger Amado Guevara, who did star at the Copa, could meanwhile be on his way to Spanish giants Real Madrid, although Valencia have shown interest, while Udinese are expected to snap up defender Samuel Caballero from Olimpia.

Young Honduran striker Michel Brown already plays in Italy with Brescia, despite not having made the grade in the Honduran league.

CHELSEA TIPPED TO CHALLENGE MAN UTD

Manchester United and Dutch international Jaap Stam believes, that after Chelsea's great signings such as his Holland team-mate Boudewijn Zenden, the Blues will be able to push Manchester United all the way in the title race this season.

"It is a great signing for Chelsea and when you look at the other players they have signed this summer, you have to say they are looking like serious title challengers," The Sun has quoted the Dutch giant.

"That's if they can mould a group of players who on paper look very impressive."

"Buying quality players is never a guarantee of success in football but if Ranieri can get his squad to gel, I can see Chelsea being a big threat to any side in the Premiership."

Ex-Madrid boss deny diverting funds

Former Real Madrid president Lorenzo Sanz has insisted the club's accounts were properly managed during his tenure despite revelations in a recent audit that $2million went missing while he was at the helm.

'Our management was always conducted in a rigorous and transparent manner and our accounts were checked by top class auditors,' Sanz said in a statement published in the Spanish press last week.

His declaration came after his successor, Florentino Perez, published the findings of an audit that revealed that during Sanz's presidency $2m had been withdrawn from club funds without proper authorisation.

Perez announced last week that he was setting up an investigation which would ask members of the previous administration to help trace the missing money.

Sanz said that although he did not agree with the way Perez had announced the investigation he would still give it his full co-operation.

He went on to insist club funds had not been used for personal gain while he was president.

'None of the directors during my period in office ever took a single peseta of club funds for personal use,' he said.

Romario, Cafu missing from Brazil's World Cup squad

Bayer Levrkussen's Brazilian striker, Lucio (left), one of the new invitees to the national side preparing to take on Uruguay in a crucial 2002 World Cup qualifier.

Brazil's preparations for their vital World Cup 2002 qualifier against Paraguay on August 15 have been hit by the withdrawal of defender Cafu.

The Roma star is to undergo an operation on his nose and will be replaced in the squad by Alessandro who plays for Atletico Paranaense.

Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari also left out veteran striker Romario out of the squad for the World Cup 2002 qualifier, instead of opting for Flamengo's Edilson.

Scolari has set the Brazilians a minimum target of nine points from their remaining five zonal qualifiers, one of which is against South American group leaders Argentina, the other against Paraguay, who could deprive the 'auriverde' of an automatic qualifying slot.

Brazil are currently in fourth place in the South American qualifying group, level on points with Uruguay. The top four sides qualify automatically for the finals in Japan and South Korea next year while the team finishing fifth go into a play-off against the winners of the Oceania zone.

Goalkeepers: Marcos (Palmeiras), Dida (AC Milan/Ita).

Defenders: Juan (Flamengo), Cris (Cruzeiro) Belletti (Sao Paulo), Alessandro (Atletico Paranaense), Lucio (Bayer Leverkusen/Ger), Roque Junior (AC Milan/Ita), Junior (Parma/Ita), Roberto Carlos (Real Madrid/Spa)

Midfielders: Vampeta (Paris Saint Germain/Fra), Eduardo Costa (Bordeaux/Fra), Tinga (Gremio), Leonardo (Sao Paulo), Juninho Paulista (Vasco), Alex (Parma/Ita), Rivaldo (Barcelona/Spa)

Strikers: Euller (Vasco), Edilson (Flamengo), Elber (Bayern Munich/Ger), Denilson (Betis/Spa), Marcelinho Paraiba (Hertha Berlin/Ger).

AC MILAN SHUTS DOOR ON SOUTH AMERICANS

AC Milan will not be signing any more south American players because they have too many international commitments, the Italian club's vice-president Adriano Galliani said last week.

Milan completed the signing of Danish defender Martin Laursen earlier in the week, on a year's loan from Parma, as cover for Brazilian Roque Junior.

'Milan have decided that we will not sign any more Brazilian players or South Americans in general,' Galliani said. 'We have signed Laursen because we know we need four central defenders. We have Roque Junior as well but he is so often tied up with his national team.

'Brazil have 21 games during 2001, which is an unsustainable situation. 'The World Cup qualifiers in south American are almost like a championship. They might make money from the television rights but clubs will not sign their players anymore,' Galliani said.

As well as Roque Junior, Milan also have a Brazilian wing-back Serginho, but he has yet to appear for his national team.

In the past year, Milan have offloaded two Argentines — defender Fabian Ayala and midfielder Andres Guglielminpietro as well as Brazilian Leonardo.

Another Argentine defender Jose Chamot also looks set to leave the club.

All Milan's summer signings have been Italian or from other European countries.

VALENCIA'S STOLEN TROPHIES RETURNED

Guilt-ridden thieves have returned five trophies stolen from Valencia's Mestalla stadium under cover of darkness.

The club said the trophies, stolen at the weekend, were discovered by security guards shortly after being left outside the team's out-of-town training ground around midnight, last week Tuesday.

Among the trophies was Valencia's only piece of European silverware, the 1980 Cup Winners' Cup.

Argentine FA moves to avert players' strike

The Argentine Football Association (AFA) is attempting to borrow millions of dollars to help clubs pay their players and avert a second strike in less than four months.

The Argentine Players Union (FAA) announced early last week that the Argentine championship, due to start the previous weekend, would not go ahead because its members were still owed millions of dollars in unpaid wages and bonuses.

The players staged a 10-day strike in May before agreeing to return to work after being promised that the money would be paid in two instalments in June and July.

As part of the agreement, the AFA said it would cough up if the clubs could not pay. But later in the week, the FAA said that only eight of the 20 first division clubs had even managed to pay June's instalments and reconfirmed its intention to go ahead with another strike.

'The agreement has not been kept...today we have nothing and the football will not start in this state of affairs,' said FAA president Sergio Marchi.

The AFA has already asked for a loan from the Banco de la Nacion but said the interest rates were too high. AFA president Julio Grondona said he would negotiate with other banks.

The AFA is estimated to need at least $15 million to end the crisis.

'There's always the possibility of a magic solution in Argentina,' said Marchi. Argentine clubs are in chronic financial difficulties and are forced to sell their top players abroad to try and make ends meet.

In contrast, the country remains one of the world's strongest in playing terms. The national team is top of the South American World Cup qualifying competition, having lost only one match out of 13.

Boca Juniors have won the South American Libertadores Cup two years running and also claim to be the best club side in the world, having won the annual Intercontinental Cup match against the European champions at the end of last year.

Italy ... Italy ...

Hidetoshi Nakata: Parma's new midfield star.

'Nakata will be a success'

Parma coach Renzo Ulivieri has backed new signing Hidetoshi Nakata to be a major success at the club following his move from Italian champions AS Roma.

Parma signed the Japanese international for US$26 million after spending most of the last year-and-a-half on the bench with Fabio Capello's team and the 24-year-old has shone for his new club during their pre-season friendlies.

"It is hardly news that he is an excellent player and this year I'm sure he will give us many fine displays," said Ulivieri of the two-time Asian Player of the Year.

"He hasn't played a lot in the last two years but this doesn't mean that he has a problem with playing regularly. Rather, he has the physical qualities and the characteristics to surprise everyone.

He'll play all season, and to a high level."

Lazio impose ban on media coverage

Lazio is three days into a self-imposed media silence in protest of the Italian media's criticism of the Lazio defence after a poor practice-match effort against Serie B side Bari.

Coach Dino Zoff has been the only member of the Lazio team who has spoken to the media since Friday.

According to Massimo Cragnotti, son of Lazio president Sergio Cragnotti, the silence is a protest against what is seen as unfair criticism.

"The club has decided to defend our defenders, because it seems they were unfairly criticised after the match against Bari.

"Ours was one of the top four defensive set-ups last season and most of these players are internationals.

"We cannot accept the level of criticism which has been directed at our players."

Blatter in crossfire over Edgar Davids' drug saga

Edgar Davids' lawyer Robert Geerlings has reacted angrily to FIFA president Sepp Blatter's comments that the Holland international has tested positive for more than the banned steroid nandrolone.

"Blatter's remarks are absolutely not true," Geerlings said.

"I believe that his remarks, given his position, are of a very questionable nature," he added.

Earlier last week, Blatter had revealed that more than just traces of nandrolone were detected when Davids failed a routine drugs test after Juventus' match against Udinese on March 4.

"I think it isn't only the question of nandrolone," Blatter told the Dutch sports program NOS Sportjournaal. "There was something else as well, but I can't say any more than that at the moment."

Later that day, a FIFA spokesman attempted to play down Blatter's comments.

"It was a misunderstanding," he said. "The president spoke about doping twice: first, during the press conference, he confirmed that FIFA has extended to international level all the suspensions for doping in every country.

"Secondly, answering a specific question from NOS television about Davids he said: 'I don't know why the final sentence has not yet been decided.

'I'm not a doctor and I'm not a specialist on this subject. There could be some different elements that would explain why the inquiry has taken so long.' Blatter never led anyone to understand that these 'different elements' could be referred to as 'different doping substances'."

Davids has denied taking the banned substance knowingly, claiming that the results of the positive drugs test must be connected to the homeopathic medicine he has taken for glaucoma.

Geerlings, meanwhile, claimed that laboratory tests have proven that the homeopathic medicine Davids uses can cause positive results in nandrolone tests although the steroid is not present in the treatment.

"We have tested the homoeopathic drink in several laboratories and the first results show that there is a substance in the drink, which isn't nandrolone or a derivative, which could produce a positive test result as if it were nandrolone.

"We are still working on a few tests that will have to confirm that this substance is indeed producing this false positive result."

Juventus refused to comment on what Blatter had said, with managing director Luciano Moggi snapping angrily at journalists:

"Juventus only know about the official results of the tests."

Coach Marcello Lippi simply brushed aside questions at a press conference. "I don't want to speak about that at all," he said.

Davids has been suspended by Italian Federation since May 17 and FIFA extended the ban worldwide on May 31.

Davids' Holland teammate Frank de Boer, however, has seen his ban reduced from 12 months to just two months by a UEFA appeal committee, but intends a further appeal against the charge that he knowingly used the anabolic steroid to enhance his performance towards the end of last season.

Like De Boer, Davids' chances of success could hinge on scientific research.

Nevertheless, Davids denied the fact of knowingly taking any banned substance.

AS Roma's Damiano Tommasi, left, and Arsenal's Fredrik Ljungberg, challenge for the ball during a friendly soccer match, last week at the Kapfenberg Stadium in Styria, Austria.

ROMA ACQUIRE ARGENTINE GOALIE

Argentinean side Newell's Old Boys goalkeeper Christian Sebastian Cejas arrived at Rome, last week and is expected to sign a one-year contract.

"When I was a little boy my godfather called me "earthquake" as I was very rebellious. But since that I've changed a lot. I don't know whether I would be Capello's first, second or third choice, I just want to show my skills," those were Argentinean's first words told to journalists in Rome Fiumicino airport.

Meanwhile, Roma returned to Rome from Kapfenberg, Austria where they participated in a tournament to resume their preparations for the new season at Trigory.

"We have worked hard in Kapfenberg. Actually we are just starting the season, however our tie with Arsenal was of great importance for us, as it isn't very easy to beat Gunners" reported ace defender, Aldair.

BRESCIA'LL BE MY LAST STOP: BAGGIO

Before the start of an important season both for him and Brescia, Roberto Baggio has confessed that Brescia will be his last team, but it doesn't mean this will be his last season.

His goal is well-known: to have a positive season to "oblige" Giovanni Trapattoni to call him for the list of the next World Cup 22 players.

In case his wish is considered, he is going to play his fourth World Championship, and here the detractors won't speak only about a series of coincidences.

Roberto Baggio

He knows there is a big competition to wear the Italian National team's jersey, but Trapattoni has frequently mentioned that Baggio at the moment has the same opportunities as other players to be invited, so his hopes are still fully reasonable.

He continued: "I didn't choose Brescia to relax myself, otherwise we'd go on Serie B: I chose the team, and the city because there was Carlo Mazzone, the best coach I had in my career". The same Mazzone is now looking for the Intertoto Cup final.

Obviously playing UEFA Cup will be a very important international "shop-window" for Brescia and Baggio.

ENGLAND ... ENGLAND ... ENGLAND

Goalkeeping crisis hits Liverpool

Liverpool will go into their crucial Champions League qualifying tie this week without goalkeeper Sander Westerveld.

The Holland international, who has been battling to over-come a thigh injury, is not expected to recover in time for Wednesday's first leg against Israeli side Haifa Maccabi.

So reserve goalkeeper Pegguy Arphexad, with just two senior Anfield games behind him, is standing by to make his European debut in one of the most important matches Liverpool will face all season.

Anfield manager Gerard Houllier, who has been regularly linked with Coventry's brilliant youngster Chris Kirkland, might even be tempted to move into the transfer market if he fears Westerveld could be absent for both legs of the tie.

Liverpool club skipper Jamie Redknapp has already warned that it will be 'an absolute nightmare' if last season's treble cup winners fail to make it past the qualifying hurdle.

But Houllier refused to even contemplate the price of failure, saying: 'I'm not going to put that kind of pressure on my players. We have done everything to get into this position and so I say: "Let's go for it".

'Being inhibited or thinking of what would happen if we didn't go through is not the right way to prepare. If we decide we want the result, we will get it.'

A $6million signing from Vitesse Arnhem two years ago, Westerveld has not always impressed Anfield fans and critics saw him finish a demanding season in magnificent style as Liverpool added the UEFA and FA Cups to their Worthington Cup success.

Guadaloupe-born Arphexad, 28, was signed as back-up from Leicester City last summer but his chances at Anfield have been limited. He played only twice last season, despite Liverpool's huge fixture load.

He deputised for two matches in the Amsterdam Tournament last month while Westerveld stayed at home for treatment but, although Liverpool won their first game 1-0 against Valencia, Ajax put three goals past the stand-in keeper.

Midfielder Steven Gerrard, who has been struggling with an ankle injury, is back in training.

Liverpool have meanwhile rejected a third offer from Blackburn for French Under 21 international defender Djimi Traore who is rated at $6m.

Manchester United's Ryan Giggs, (centre) skips past Celtic's Chris Sutton , left, and Jackie McNamara during Giggs' testimonial game at Old Trafford, Manchester, last week.

SHEARER EYES SEPT. COMEBACK

Former England skipper Alan Shearer is optimistic that he will be able to return to action in the Premiership match against Newcastle on September 8, the Press Association reported.

The 30-year-old striker has been sidelined since March after undergoing the second of two operations on his damaged knee.

He is currently battling to regain full fitness after being allowed to step up his training, and will fly to Paris for a consultation with American specialist Richard Steadman on August 7, 12 days before his side kick off their new campaign at Chelsea.

The injury was not expected to be career-threatening although there has been some concern.

"Alan Shearer is going very well," Robson said. "We've just got to get it right with Shearer.

"He mustn't break down. However long it takes, that's how long it will be. It's make or break for Alan.

We know that, he knows that and we can't push him into a match when he's not ready.

Shearer would like to be fit for the visit of derby rivals Sunderland to St James' Park on August 26, but that will almost certainly come too soon for him.

The break for England's World Cup qualifiers means that he would not miss another game before Newcastle head for Middlesbrough on September 8.

'VAN DER SAR IS THE BEST'

Fulham and Dutch international goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar, who last week completed $10.5million switch from Juventus, is the "best in the world" according to his compatriots in the Premiership.

"He's the best keeper in the world right now. I'm not being biased because he's Dutch — he proved at Juventus that he's the best keeper in the hardest league in the world," Arsenal's Giovanni van Bronckhorst said.

Another Arsenal's star, Dennis Bergkamp, who played alongside van der Sar at Ajax, added: "He is more than just a great goalkeeper - he's a match-winner and he would walk straight into my team."

Meanwhile, van der Sar himself has described Fulham as having a family atmosphere which he said was the reason he chose to join the Premiership newcomers.

"It's like a family here. I feel at home and I feel appreciated," said the giant stopper.

Van der Sar, who won three successive league titles between 1994 and 1996 with Dutch outfit Ajax, was realistic about Fulham's chances of challenging for the Premiership title.

"The championship is not a realistic ambition this year but maybe in four years' time," he said.

Fulham boss Jean Tigana welcomed the arrival of Van der Sar, who brings some experience to a young squad."Edwin has played at the top level and it's very important to have a top class goalkeeper," he said.

ABSW FORECASTS ... ABSW FORECASTS ... ABSW FORECASTS ...

LEEDS UNITED
Position in 2000/01: 4th
Transfers: Out- Tony Hackworth (Notts County), Kevin Dixon (Barnsley).

Despite making the semi-finals of the Champions League, Leeds had a disappointing season on the local front. Injuries to key players like Harry Kewell, Lucas Radebe and Olivier Dacourt hampered their campaign, alongside the off field drama that surrounded Lee Bowyer and Jonathan Woodgate.

A less hectic schedule this season should see O'Leary's team challenging for the top three.

Leeds have importantly secured Mark Viduka's future who will play a vital role alongside Aussie teammate Kewell. Also expect new boy Robbie Keane to be firing up front. Leeds are definitely a team for the future but I can't see them knocking-off the big three this year.

Players to watch: Harry Kewell, Mark Viduka, Ian Harte.

LEICESTER CITY
Position in 2000/01: 13th
Transfers: In- Dennis Wise (Chelsea), Ian Walker (Tottenham Hotspur).

Out- Richard Cresswell (Preston North End), Stuart Campbell (Grimsby).

After a promising start the to last season Foxes fell away dramatically after losing to Wycombe Wanderers in the FA Cup. Peter Taylor has brought into the squad two smart signings in Dennis Wise and Ian Walker. Wise is a bargain at only £1.6 million and still has a lot to offer at this late stage of his career.

The ex-Chelsea captain could be the inspirational replacement for Neil Lennon who was sorely missed last season, and will promote the industrious 'grinding' style of play that Leicester are renowned for. The Foxes won't figure at the top of the table but could make Europe at best. Players to watch: Matt Elliot, Dennis Wise.

LIVERPOOL
Position in 2000/01: 3rd
Transfers› In- John Arne Riise (Monaco).

Liverpool were the team of the season last year winning the cup treble and qualifying for the Champions League. What was important for the Reds is that they finally showed the sort of character and consistency to match the wealth of talent they have displayed in patches for many years. The Reds have snapped up intelligent defender-come-midfielder John Arne Riise and welcome back inspirational club captain Jamie Redknapp from injury. Fowler, Owen and Heskey remain he most-feared strike force in the competition. The Reds only bone of contention would be a defensive partner for the brilliant Sami Hyypia.

Liverpool were the only team to do the Premier League double over Manchester United last season and could give the title a good shake this year.

Players to watch: Sami Hyypia, Steven Gerrard, Michael Owen.

MANCHESTER UNITED
Position in 2000/01: 1st
Transfers: In- Juan Sebastian Veron (Lazio), Ruud Van Nistelrooy (PSV).

Out- Jesper Blomqvist (Out of contract), Andy Goram (Out of contract), Teddy Sheringham (Tottenham Hotspur) Jonathan Greening(Middlebrough).

Alex Ferguson broke the British transfer record this summer with the purchase of Juan Sebastian Veron (£28.1 million) from Lazio. The Argntine international is a very skillful and complete midfielder who should compliment the aggressive Roy Keane very well in the middle of the park. Fergie's other big signing, Ruud Van Nistlerooy, was a prolific scorer in Holland but will be tested in the more physical English game. Ferguson has made it clear that the Champions League is his number one priority but United will be aiming for the double and are certainly the team to beat yet again. The only question is whether the other big guns have closed the gap.

Players to watch: Juan Sebastian Veron, David Beckham, Jaap Stam.

MIDDLESBOROUGH
Position in 2000/01: 14th
Transfers: In- Gareth Southgate (Aston Villa), Szilard Nemeth (Inter Bratislava) Jonathan Greening(Man Utd)

Out- Christian Karembeu (Olympiakos), Neil Maddison (Darlington).

Steve McClaren takes over the reigns at Riverside after last year's saviour Terry Venables decided to leave the club. Boro have bought one big signing in well polished England International Gareth Southgate, forming a very solid central defence. Szilard Nemeth, there other signing, is a well rated Slovakian striker. Cristian Karembeu's move will hurt the team as he was one of their best players last season holding the midfield togeter. McClaren has said he wants to blood a few of the younger players at the club so instant success is unlikey but Boro should stay up, perhaps more comfortably than they did last season.

Players to watch: Gareth Southgate, Alen Boksic, Mark Schwarzer.

NEWCASTLE UNITED
Position in 2000/01: 11th
Transfers: In- Craig Bellamy (Coventry City), Robbie Elliot (Bolton) Laurent Robert(PSG).

Out- Stephen Glass (Watford), Kevin Gallagher (Out of contract).

Newcastle had another ordinary season last year and I can't see much changing this time around. Bobby Robson has bought Welsh striker Craig Bellamy to partner a fit Alan Shearer, and solid left back Robbie Elliot. The Magpies are chasing French international Laurent Robert who is an excellent acquisition and similar style of player to Ryan Giggs. Newcastle have a useful squad but lack two or three quality players to really be rated.

Players to watch: Nolberto Solano, Kieron Dyer, Alan Shearer.

SOUTHAMPTON
Position in 2000/01: 10th
Transfers: In- Rory Delap (Derby County), Jacinto Ela Eyene (Espanyol), Anders Svensson (Elfsborg)

Out- Hassan Kachloul (Aston Villa), Luis Boa Morte (Fulham).

The Saints welcome versatile attacking midfielder Rory Delap, Swedish midfielder Anders Svensson and former Espanyol attacking midfielder Jacinto Ela Eyene.

Delap is an excellent purchase and an important replacement for the outgoing Kachloul. It will be interesting to see if Southampton's new home, the Friends Provident St. Mary's Stadium, will be as daunting as the Dell, and whether new manager Graham Stuart can fill the shoes left by the inspirational Glenn Hoddle.

Players to watch: Rory Delap, Marian Pahars, James Beattie.

SUNDERLAND
Position in 2000/01: 7th
Transfers: In- David Bellion (Cannes), Lillian Laslandes (Bordeaux), Baki Mercimek (HFC Haarlem), Nicolas Medina (Argentinos Juniors). Out- Carsten Fregaard (FC Copenhagen).

Sunderland have bought quietly over the summer but their biggest signing, striker Lillian Laslandes, should have an impact this season. Laslandes has an excellent goal scoring record in France and is a French international. Other signings Nicolas Medina and Baki Mercimek are both promising players for the future. Peter Reid has managed to retain the core of his squad and an in-form Kevin Phillips should see Sunderland finish above arch rivals Newcastle, maybe even in the top five.

Players to watch: Lillian Laslandes, Kevin Philips.

(To be concluded next week).

WORLD

FIFA World Rankings

(Valid until August 22)

FIFA founded 1904

1	France	810	69	Bolivia	516	137	Grenada	298
2	Brazil	795	70	Senegal	509	138	Yemen	295
3	Argentina	764	71	Burkina Faso	506	139	Rwanda	286
4	Italy	735	72=	Algeria	505	140	Myanmar	283
5	Germany	726	72=	Kuwait	505	141	Tajikistan	271
6	Spain	715	74	Iraq	504	142	Surinam	268
7	Portugal	712	75	Bosnia-Herz	501	143	Luxemburg	263
8	Paraguay	711	76	Cyprus	500	144	Ethiopia	262
9	Czech Republic	709	77	Macedonia FYR	498	145	Andorra	255
10	Netherlands	695	78	Canada	496	146	Palestine	253
11	Romania	689	79	Georgia	495	147	Bangladesh	251
12	Yugoslavia	688	80	Estonia	493	148	Maldives	248
13	Mexico	687	81	Congo DR	488	149=	Liechtenstein	246
14=	Colombia	682	82	Cuba	483	149=	Sri Lanka	246
14=	England	682	83	Haiti	482	151	Korea DPR	245
16	United States	672	84	Belarus	480	152	Tanzania	239
17	Denmark	670	85=	Albania	475	153	Antigua & Barbuda	235
18	Croatia	668	85=	New Zealand	475	154	Botswana	230
19	Sweden	659	87	El Salvador	473	155	Benin	225
20	Russia	658	88	Indonesia	470	156	Nepal	220
21	Norway	654	89	Gabon	469	157	Dominica	216
22	Tunisia	647	89	Qatar	469	158	Gambia	215
23	Ireland Republic	640	91	Oman	467	159	San Marino	213
24	Poland	638	92	Congo	460	160	Bermuda	209
25	South Africa	633	93	Syria	456	161	Cayman Islands	207
26	Belgium	631	94	Lithuania	455	162=	Cape Verde Is.	206
27	Trinidad & Tobago	622	95	Latvia	453	162=	Dominican Rep.	206
28=	Morocco	621	96	Guinea	451	164	British Virgin Is.	202
28=	Saudi Arabia	621	97=	Armenia	449	165	Kyrgyzstan	196
30	Uruguay	620	97=	Namibia	449	166	Laos	194
31	Chile	619	99	Lebanon	440	167=	Belize	187
32	Japan	614	100=	Jordan	437	167=	Eritrea	187
33	Costa Rica	610	100=	Vietnam SR	437	169=	Chinese Taipei	182
34	Cameroon	609	102	Kenya	423	169=	Vanuatu	182
35=	Slovakia	608	103	Moldova	422	171	Cambodia	178
35=	Turkey	608	104	Kazakhstan	421	172	Mauritania	172
37	Scotland	606	105	Wales	416	173	Chad	165
38	Egypt	602	106	Northern Ireland	413	174	Samoa	158
39=	Korea Republic	599	107	Barbados	412	175	Guyana	154
39=	Nigeria	599	108	Singapore	410	176	Cook Islands	152
39=	Slovenia	599	109	Malaysia	404	177	Tonga	151
42	Cote d' Ivoire	594	110	Mali	399	178	Philippines	143
43	Austria	592	111	Uganda	390	179	Netherlands Ant.	124
44	Israel	586	112	Panama	388	180	C. African Rep.	121
45	Jamaica	584	113	Azerbaijan	383	181=	Guinea-Bissau	115
46	**AUSTRALIA**	583	114	Libya	380	181=	Macao	115
47	Ukraine	579	115=	Turkmenistan	377	183	Bahamas	111
48	Honduras	578	115=	Venezuela	377	184	Sao Tome e Principe	110
49	Bulgaria	577	117	India	376			
50	Ecuador	571	118	Bahrain	363	185	Pakistan	106
51	Iran	566	119	Faroe Islands	359	186	Aruba	101
52	Iceland	565	120	Malawi	357	187	Niger	95
53	Peru	560	121	Mozambique	353	188	Mongolia	94
54	Hungary	559	122	Sudan	351	189	Nicaragua	89
55	Ghana	557	123	Fiji	349	190	Brunei Darussalam	86
56	Angola	555	124	Madagascar	348	190	Equatorial Guinea	86
57	Greece	552	125	Mauritius	341	192	Seychelles	79
58	Guatemala	548	126	Tahiti	336	193	Djibouti	76
59	Finland	545	127	Lesotho	329	194	Anguilla	65
59	Zambia	545	128	St Lucia	327	195	Papua New Guinea	61
61	Thailand	541	129	St Kitts & Nevis	324	196	Somalia	56
62	Switzerland	539	130=	St Vincent/Gre	323	197	Puerto Rico	55
63=	China PR	527	130=	Swaziland	323	198	US Virgin Islands	48
63=	Uzbekistan	527	132	Sierra Leone	314	199	Guam	27
65	Togo	520	133	Malta	312	200	Turks and Caicos Is.	21
66	Liberia	519	134	Hong Kong	310	201	American Samoa	16
67=	UAE	518	135	Solomon Islands	309	202	Bhutan	14
67=	Zimbabwe	518	136	Burundi	305	203	Montserrat	11

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.*

Transfer News ... Transfer News ...

Suker sticks with Seville

Davor Suker: "I want to play only in Seville."

Ex-forward of Real Madrid and Seville, Davor Suker said he is not willing to play for Xeres, Spanish Second Division club.

The Croatian insists on playing for Seville, where he is valued as a player. Despite the absence of any offers to play next season, the forward did not accept the suggestions of Vienna, Austria and Xeres, Spain.

"I know that I am Xeres's president's favourite, however I'd not like to give hopes concerning my move to the club. I want to play only in Seville, and I am not interested in any other offers", said Suker.

The 33-year-old Croatian star, who emerged as highest goalscorer at the France 98 World Cup finals, has seen a downturn in form leaving him with fewer and fewer top flight football action.

After joining Premiership big guns, Arsenal in 1999, Suker was sold off to less-prestigious West Ham last season where he still found it tough to nail down a regular shirt.

The Londoners released him from his contract at the end of the season, with Suker opting to return to Seville, where he was plucked by Real Madrid in 1995.

ROBERT JOIN TOON ARMY

Newcastle United are close to signing Paris St Germain striker Láurent Robert, according to manager Bobby Robson early last week.

"Robert is in town. He arrived yesterday and he's having a stringent medical today (Thursday)," said Robson who has been chasing the French international for several weeks.

Robson said that there were other formalities to be completed but he said he was hopeful of clinching the deal before the end of the week at the latest.

The fee for the 26-year-old Frenchman is believed to be around $15 million. He would become Robson's third acquisition of the close-season after Craig Bellamy and Bosman free transfer capture Robbie Elliott.

Laurent Robert

FULHAM EYES BAYERN'S JANCKER

Fulham are planning a move for Bayern Munich's $15m-rated striker Carsten Jancker, according to reports in Germany.

Craven Cottage boss Jean Tigana is understood to be eyeing a move for Jancker, who played in the Champions League final victory against Valencia, after missing out on Czech Jan Koller.

Fulham hoped to do a deal for Koller, but he opted to join Borussia Dortmund.

Tigana faces opposition from Serie A side Fiorentina, but he is determined to make a major signing after also being snubbed by Liverpool's $6m new boy John Arne Riise.

Bayern announced last month they are putting Jancker and Swedish defender Patrick Andersson up for sale.

The decison angered Bayern captain Stefan Effenberg, who blasted the management of the club. He said: "Both of them have earned their spurs in battle last season both at domestic and international level.

"I realise it is the board's decision but nevertheless if it was up to me I would keep them."

Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, who also guided Bayern to the title last term, announced on the eve of the Champions League final that Jancker and Andersson would be sold before their contracts expired.

Andersson, 29 and who was a member of the Swedish team which reached the 1994 World Cup semi-final, has since joined Spanish giants Barcelona.

The 26-year-old Jancker joined Bayern after a successful spell at Rapid Vienna where his goals inspired them to the 1996 Cup Winners Cup final.

PORTO FINALLY SECURE JARDEL

Brazilian international Mario Jardel at last signedwith FC Porto after the Portuguese club reached a cash-plus-players deal with top Turkish outfit Galatasaray.

"We have agreed with Porto officials on Jardel for eight million dollars plus three players," the Istanbul club's spokesman Aziz Ustel said late last week, after an initial denial by club officials.

The players to join the 2000 UEFA Cup winners on three-year contracts would be Ricardo Costa, Dmitri Alenitchev and Bino, Anatolia news agency cited Ustel as saying.

He added that Jardel and his manager were still negotiating with Porto manager Paulo Barbosa.

"Everything is settled on our side. He (Jardel) reached an agreement as well, and has signed a contract," Ustel said.

Jardel, 27, joined Galatasaray last year for a fee of around 25 million dollars from FC Porto and scored 34 times for the Istanbul club in his first season.

He had been Portugal's topscorer for four years with Porto from 1997-2000.

Jardel originally joined Porto in 1996 and was top scorer in all four seasons he played there. He moved to Galatarasay a year ago as a replacement for Hakan Sukur, who went to Inter Milan.

Earlier in the week, Galatasaray's website carried news than the clubs had agreed the $8 million deal but in a different story on the English section of the website it said the player had rejected Porto's offer.

Neither Jardel or anyone at the club was immediately available to comment on that — but a story in Turkish on the website reporting the deal said Porto had also agreed to transfer three players to Galatasaray in addition to the transfer fee and pledged 40 percent of the proceeds of any future sale of Jardel.

Galatasaray named the three Porto players involved in the deal as Ricardo da Costa, Portuguese international Bino Macaes, and possibly Paolo Sergio.

But the English story said Jardel had decided to stay in Turkey after rejecting offers from a number of other clubs.

Transfer News ...

Chelsea grab Zenden for $11m

Barcelona winger Boudewijn Zenden joined big-spending Premiership club Chelsea last week for a fee of $11million.

The 24-year-old Dutch international signed a four-year deal with the Stamford Bridge club which have been trailing him for over a year.

Zenden aims to help Chelsea make the title race more interesting by challenging Manchester United for the Premiership crown.

"I hope there is going to be a change upstairs in the number one position this season because it's getting quite boring," he said.

The winger, who turned down a move to Newcastle earlier this summer, said Chelsea's ambitions matched his own.

"They are in the UEFA this year and the goal next year is to play in the Champions League," he said.

Boudewijn Zenden

"I also want to play a big role in winning the Premiership. I have a lot of ambition like them, so we fit each other.

"I am quite confident of winning a regular place. If I get the opportunity then I'm sure I will not disappoint anyone."

Zenden said his problems at Barcelona were behind him now and that he was totally committed to bringing success to Chelsea.

"I had problems at Barcelona so this was the right time for me to move to Chelsea and the Premiership," he said.

"It is a great challenge to be here and I will give everything for the Blues."

Zenden has struggled to secure regular first-team place at the Nou Camp since the arrival of former Arsenal winger Marc Overmars.

The arrival of Zenden takes Chelsea's summer spending to more than $45.8 million dollars) having already splashed out to lure French defender William Gallas, England international Frank Lampard and France's World Cup and Euro 2000 winner Emmanuel Petit to south-west London.

Argentine soccer player Juan Esnaider holds an FC Porto shirt with his name after signing a one year contract with the club in Oporto, northern Portugal, last week.

CELTIC LAND HARTSON, 2 OTHERS

Scottish champions Celtic made a triple signing last week with John Hartson, Steve Guppy and Momo Sylla all moving to Parkhead.

Welsh international striker Hartson has joined from first division Coventry in a deal worth around $8.59 million on a four-year contract.

Leicester winger Guppy has put pen to paper on a three-year contract to rejoin his former boss Martin O'Neill and wing-back Sylla has signed from Scottish Premier League rivals St Johnstone on a five-year contract.

"I am delighted to welcome John Hartson, Steve Guppy and Momo Sylla to Celtic Park," said Celtic coach O'Neill.

"Our season is just one game old and I am confident that all three will play important roles in the coming months."

Hartson admitted that he was relieved to have come through his medical after failing the same test at both Rangers and Tottenham before.

"What gives me the most pleasure is coming through the medical," he said.

"There was a black mark hanging over me on the medical but I've played over 40 games since then and proved that my knee is fine. "I'm just delighted to be a Celtic player and I'm ready to play now."

BOBAN OFF TO CELTA

AC Milan have agreed to loan their Croatian international Zvonimir Boban to Celta Vigo for a year, the Spanish Primera Liga club announced last week.

The 32-year-old Boban will become the third player loaned to the Galician club after the arrivals of Marseille's French forward Florian Maurice and compatriot Peter Luccin, who arrives from Paris St Germain. Boban arrived at the Italian Serie A side in 1992 but has proved surplus to AC Milan's requirements of late.

He was reportedly linked with a permanent move to English premiership side, Totenham Hotspurs.

Spurs coach, Glenn Hoddle has severally voiced his interest in the once-dreaded striker, but it looked like AC Milan were never willing to let the Croat, who has been at the Serie A giants for a surprisingly-long nine years, to go.

WORLD RESULTS ... WORLD RESULTS

FRENCH CHAMPIONNAT

Lille's Fernando d'Amico (left) watches as a Lorient player falls to the ground, during their first division soccer match over the weekend.

NANTES LOSE AGAIN

Defending champions Nantes crashed to their second successive defeat of the season over the weekend when they were beaten 2-1 at home by Lens.

Senegal star Hadji el Diouf headed Lens' winner just four minutes from the end of their match with Nantes from an excellent cross from substitute Lamine Sakho.

Lens were the more confident side in the opening exchanges and deservedly took the lead in the 31st minute.

Stephane Pedron passed to Daniel Moreira, who chested the ball down and slotted the ball home despite the efforts of Nantes goalkeeper Mickael Landrau.

However, Nantes eventually found their way back into the match but they had to wait until the 72nd minute to grab the equaliser.

Ferdinand Coly fouled Nestor Fabbri in the area and Olivier Quint scored from the penalty spot. Diouf's winner ensured Lens maintained their one hundred percent start to the campaign and made them the early leaders of the table on goal difference from Sochaux.

Lens coach Joel Muller paid tribute to his team after their win. "I don't think many teams will come here and win this season. Our victory today was due to all the hard work we have put in."

Sochaux edged a seven goal thriller at home to Rennes.

Mickael Pagisand Pierre-Allain Frau had given them a 3-0 lead at the interval.

But Rennes mounted a second half fightback with goals from Lamine Dialta (2) and an Olivier Monterrubio penalty.

However, Sochaux grabbed a 90th minute winner when Frau converted a penalty after he had been fouled by Christophe Le Roux.

Meanwhile, Paris St Germain battled out their second successive draw of the new campaign. They were held 1-1 at Auxerre for whom Djibril Cisse scored with eight minutes left.

The Senegalese striker, who hit four last weekend, scored a spectacular goal after fine build-up work from Finn Teemu Taino and Yann Lachuer.

Mauricio Pochettino had given the Paris side the lead after 39 minutes. They also handed Brazilian striker Ronaldinho a debut after his protracted move from Gremio Porto Alegre had been finalised last week.

He showed some flashes of inspiration but was unable to find a winner for his new employers.

Nantes 1 Lens 2, Auxerre 1 Paris St Germain 1, Guingamp 1 Bastia 0, Lille 3 Lorient 1, Lyon 2 Sedan 0, Metz 2 Troyes 1, Monaco 0 Montpellier 0, Sochaux 4 Rennes 3, Marseille 0 Bordeaux 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Lens	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
2. Sochaux	2	2	0	0	5	3	6
3. Auxerre	2	1	1	0	6	1	4
4. Lille	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
5. Bordeaux	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
6. Troyes	2	1	0	1	4	2	3
7. Metz	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
8. Lyon	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
9. Lorient	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
10. Guingamp	2	1	0	1	1	3	3
11. Marseille	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
12. Montpellier	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
13. Paris SG	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
14. Bastia	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
15. Monaco	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
16. Sedan	2	0	1	1	1	3	1
17. Nantes	2	0	0	2	1	4	0
18. Rennes	2	0	0	2	3	9	0

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

BAYERN CRUSH SCHALKE

Champions Bayern Munich got back to winning ways Saturday with a 3-0 hammering of the side they just beat to the title last season, Schalke 04.

Bayern, humbled on the opening day last weekend at promoted Borussia Moenchengladbach, bounced back in style at the Olympic Stadium as Peruvian new signing Claudio Pizarro took just six minutes to get on the scoresheet with a close range finish off a pass from Mehmet Scholl.

Scholl added a second just seven minutes later with a crafty freekick and with Schalke reeling under the onslaught Niko Kovac made it three, five minutes before half-time as he struck home following a corner from Scholl.

Bayern were happy to pass the ball around after that and pick up three points to kickstart their season.

Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, who says he will be staying put at the club despite his name being linked with Manchester United at the end of the season, said he was satisfied with the performance after criticising the team last week.

"We are very happy that we won and looked very solid in doing so.

"The important thing is that we believed in our capabilities and are integrating the new players well," said Hitzfeld.

Schalke counterpart Huub Stevens said he was almost resigned already to chasing Bayern's coattails all season.

"We have clearly got a lot of hard work ahead of us. Their striker got right in front of our back four for the opening goal and the second goal went right through the wall - that just shouldn't happen," lamented Stevens.

Elsewhere, Bayer Leverkusen and Borussia Dortmund made it maximum points from their opening two matches.

Leverkusen strolled to a 3-0 win at Hansa Rostock, who were playing their first match after their scheduled opener at Schalke was postponed with Schalke's new stadium not quite ready for business.

Goals from Yildiray Basturk, German international veteran Ulf Kirsten and Zoltan Sebescen saw Leverkusen coast home.

Borussia Dortmund managed an impressive 2-0 success at Hertha Berlin with Brazilian Marcio Amoroso on target for his third of the season after 52 minutes.

Miroslav Stevic made the points safe three minutes from time to delight coach and former Dortmund star Matthias Sammer.

Cologne are third with four points after a 2-0 home win over pointless 1860 Munich, whose coach Werner Lorant is clinging on to his job for dear life.

"We coudn't afford to lose that one, we are lacking points and also confidence," said Lorant.

Bayern Munich Peruvian-born striker, Claudio Pizarro erupts in delight after scoring over the weekend against Schalke.

Nurnberg 2 Freiburg 0, Kaiserslautern 3 Bor. M'gladbach 2, Cologne 2 1860 Munich 0, Bayern Munich 3 Schalke04 0, VfL Wolfsburg 1 Sankt Pauli 1, Hertha Berlin 0 Borussia Dortmund 2, Werder Bremen 3 Energie Cottbus 2, SV Hamburg 2 VfL Stuttgart 0, Hansa Rostock 0 Bayer Leverkusen 3.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Kaiserslautern	2	2	0	0	7	2	6
2. Bayer Leverkusen	2	2	0	0	5	1	6
3. Borussia Dortmund	2	2	0	0	4	0	6
4. Cologne	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
5. Bayern Munich	2	1	0	1	3	1	3
6. SC Freiburg	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
7. SV Hamburg	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
8. Energie Cottbus	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
9. B. Moenchengladbach	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
10.FC Nuremberg	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
11.Werder Bremen	2	1	0	1	3	5	3
12.Sankt Pauli	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
13.VfL Wolfsburg	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
14.Hertha Berlin	2	0	1	1	0	2	1
15.VfL Stuttgart	2	0	1	1	0	2	1
16.Hansa Rostock	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
17.Schalke 04	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
18.1860 Munich	2	0	0	2	0	6	0

PAUL AGOSTINO

1860 Munich & Australia